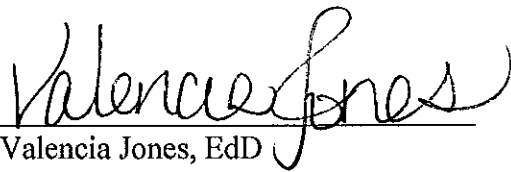ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, THE IMPACT OF TEACHER INTERACTION IN THE AVID COLLEGE READINESS SYSTEM, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the School of Education, Concordia University Irvine.

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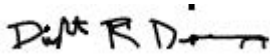Committee Chair

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THE IMPACT OF TEACHER INTERACTION IN THE AVID PROGRAM

by

Michael P. Collins

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for the
Degree of
Doctor of Education
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Concordia University Irvine
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School of Education
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ABSTRACT

A great amount of research has shown the importance of the teacher-student relationship, especially as it relates to students' academic, and social and emotional outcomes. Pianta (1999) explains that the relationship between children, teachers, and non-parental adults have a significant role in the students' development of competencies, their social and emotional wellbeing, and their willingness to participate in school regularly. Ellerbrock, Abbas, DiCicco, Denmon, Sabella, and Hart (2015) also agree that through meaningful relationships grounded in genuine care, educators nurture a responsive classroom environment that can help set the foundation for student success. This study examines the relationship between Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) students in grades 11 and 12 and their AVID teachers. Participants of the study were from five local high schools in one school district. Data was collected from students surveyed on their relationship with their AVID teachers of whom they have had over their AVID career. Measurements such as using a Likert scale survey and focus group interviews were used to determine the influence the participants' AVID teacher(s) had on the participants' academics, social and emotional growth, and a willingness to attend school regularly. Results of the measuring tools reveal a strong correlation between the relationship of the AVID teacher and the impact it has on the participant, especially the positive influence in academics and social and emotional outcomes.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As researcher, I owe a debt of gratitude and thanks to a wide range of individuals. These individuals have all played a role at some point in my life to allow me to achieve the pinnacle of educational excellence. As is evident in this study, over time, positive relationships are very impacting. They are forged, cultivated, nurtured and most certainly endure that test of time. And although not all the individuals listed here are currently impacting my life immediately, they all most certainly did so at some memorable point in the last five decades.

I wish to thank my dissertation committee members: Dr. Belinda Karge (Chairperson), Valencia Jones, Ed.D. (Methodologist), and Denise Harshman, Ed.D. (Reader and AVID expert)—all of whom impacted and shaped the way I developed this document. A special kudos to Dr. Karge for keeping my motivation and inspiration in high gear during some challenging times.

Many thanks to Emily Wolk, Ph.D., Michele Cunha, Ed.D., and Steve Larson for providing the invaluable data from the schools and participants in this study.

Committing to a three-year journey to complete a dissertation and earn an Educational Doctorate could not have occurred without a fantastic cohort. Concordia University Irvine's Cohort 4 was an amazing group of collaborative classmates. Time-after-time, colleague-after-colleague, we found ourselves working hard together, studying together, bonding together, thus resulting in special friendships, which became solidified forever. I'd like to take a moment to thank two remarkable individuals from Cohort 4: Becky Spady, Ed.D. and James (JR) Ragaisis Ed.D. The three of us became very close in this educational journey, in our success and struggles, and in our common Christian faith. However, in the end and with God's grace we made it through the thick and thin.

My educational track really started in 1976 when I became Parks and Recreation Leader. Del Aire Park is where I met Andrew and Daniel Ruedas, brothers of great intellectual abilities, strong moral values and unique kindness. These brothers, four and seven years my elder, took me under their wings and guided me with the importance of being connected to someone. I learned the importance of an education and of having positive and influential relationships.

Another gratitude goes to a wonderful lady of whom I have known since 1986. Darleen Peters, M.S.N. Darleen (a retired nursing university instructor) impacted my educational pathway. Much of my teaching pedagogies, philosophies and methodologies I attribute to the advice of Darleen. I am forever in her debt and I hope she finds my research inspiring.

A huge debt of gratitude and love goes to my wife, Lisa. Lisa has endured the long nights, weekends and countless hours of my reading, writing and editing. She has been at my side as a source of support and has never once stated that I should quit or give up this dream I had to earn a Doctoral degree. And despite a few emotional setbacks and other challenges during this journey, she has been at my side one – hundred percent of the time. Thank you, Lisa. I love you for your devotion!

Finally, recognizing the importance of relationships—of all kinds, begins with the notion that all relationships are seeded under the Lord's hand. As such, I hope all appreciate the wisdom in *2 Peter 1:5-6* on that importance of having relationships:

Knowing God leads to self-control. Self-control leads to patient endurance, and patient endurance leads to Godliness. Godliness leads to love for other Christians, and finally you will grow to have genuine love for everyone.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

One of the most important assets teachers could possess in their cannon of teaching skills

is their ability to connect with their students, and personal mentoring connections between

teachers and students in high school are unique components of the developmental process

(Bernstein-Yamashiro, 2004). A successful relationship with your students will be just like the

other meaningful relationships in your life; it will require patience, planning, work and

commitment (Thompson, 2013). Hansen (2018) states that many students, despite abysmal

circumstances, are thriving due to resilience-building power of teacher. Connecting with

students is an ability that nearly all teachers come to learn over time in their professional careers.

Many teachers struggle with this ability while others thrive. What is known is that there are a

few approaches that prepare teachers on how to connect with students. The *Responsive*

Classroom (RC) approach is an instructional delivery and social-emotional learning intervention

designed to provide teachers with skills needed to create caring, well-managed classroom

environments that are conducive to learning (Baroody, Rimm-Kaufman, Larsen & Curby, 2014).

This study will reveal numerous ways that teachers develop their relationships with

students. Thompson (2013) speaks of using *verbal immediacy*. She states that using language to

create verbal immediacy is one of the best approaches you take to create positive a relationship

with students. The research conducted on teacher-student relationships has profoundly supported

the importance of the relationship. Gehlbach, Brinkworth, and Harris (2012) detailed substantial

evidence that the positive aspects of teacher-student relationships are associated with

achievement and motivational outcomes. Furthermore, Dweck (2016) points out that children's

self-beliefs of their own abilities and intelligence are key factors in how they achieve in

school and that these students had a growth-mindset that mobilized their resources for learning.

Additionally, Cooper and Miness (2014) define teacher care as the teacher's concern for students' wellbeing, and we position care as an orientation that teachers hold toward students and that they express through various actions and dispositions. Furthermore, Cooper and Miness (2014) detailed that caring student-teacher relationships are vital for the academic outcomes they can foster, such as engagement, and for the positive pro-social impact they can have on students. Henderson, Mapp, and Averett, (2002) studied the impact of family and community connections on student achievement. They explained how the right kinds of school-family connections— those built on relationships, listening, welcoming, and shared decision making—can produce multiple benefits for students, including higher GPAs, test scores, better attendance, taking challenging courses, improved social skills, and improved behavior.

Meanwhile, studies by Murray and Pianta (2007) discovered that the quality of the relationships that children have with teachers has important implications for their emotional and behavioral wellbeing. Additionally, Pianta and Allen (2008) found that at the secondary level positive relationships with adults are perhaps the single most important ingredient promoting positive youth development. Cooper and Miness (2014) explain that students who experience a positive student-teacher relationship tend to experience higher levels of belonging in that teacher's class and in school more broadly as compared with students who do not experience such positive relationships.

Hargraves (1998) found that relationships with students are the most important source of enjoyment and motivation for teachers; he also found that conflicted or alienated relationships tend to diminish both teachers' professional satisfaction and their personal sense of wellbeing. More convincingly, Jensen (2013), who wrote about how to engage students with poverty stated:

Every classroom includes multiple layers of relationships that matter. These different

types of relationships include teacher-to-student (does the teacher care about and respect

the student?); teacher-to-class (does each student respect and like the teacher?); student-

to-teacher (does each student feel included?); and staff-to-staff (do students see adults

working together in a healthy manner). Each of these relationships has its own purpose

and effect, and each can be positively influenced by the teacher. (p. 41)

Since conflict is often at the core relational difficulties, many school settings today are putting

into practice Restorative Practices (RP), which is an approach to problem-solving in the school

setting, with relationships at its core (Fox-Petersen, 2016). Fox-Petersen (2016) continues to

explain:

When conflicts arise in our school communities—due to misunderstandings, hurt

feelings, competing needs and interests, broken rules, differences of opinions, and

behaviors that have brought harm to others—we provide opportunities for all involved to

share honestly about what happened, listen empathetically to each other's perspectives,

accept ownership for one's role, repair any harm, and restore positive relationships within

the community. Further, school staff demonstrate care by establishing firm and clear

expectations for student behaviors while communicating that, although we might not like

misbehavior, we still care about the welfare and wellbeing of everyone. In other words, a

restorative, relationship-affirming approach to problems 'separates the deed from the

doer.' (p. 1).

Ferlazzo (2011) elaborated on the importance of community. Ferlazzo (2011) discussed how

schools have a history of developing relationships among different entities in the community.

Social capital, describes the societal and economical value of building connections. Social capital originated during a parent engagement strategy that yielded numerous benefits.

This study is important to not only validate the current research done, but also to extend a closer look at the overall importance that teachers must have with their students in a relational perspective. By having positive relationships with their students, and creating avenues to resolve conflicts, teachers will indirectly improve various aspects of their students' lives. For example, when teacher-student relationships is mutually respected, student engagement is high. Decker, Dona and Christianson (2007) found that when teachers experienced close relationships with their students, students were less likely to avoid school, were more self-motivated and directed, and more cooperative and engaged. Further evidence from Cornelius-White (2007) found teachers' positive relationships with students, as demonstrated through such characteristics as empathy and warmth, lead to higher engagement, fewer resistant behaviors, and improved achievement. Bondy and Ross (2008) discussed the impact that teacher can make by being warm, friendly, and yet firm in their relationships with students. They utilized a term coined *warm demander*— a teacher stance that communicates both warmth and a non-negotiable demand for student effort and mutual respect. Bondy and Ross (2008) explain:

> When students from advantaged backgrounds become disengaged, they may learn less than they could, but they usually get by or they get second chances.... In contrast, when students . . . in high-poverty, urban high schools become disengaged, they are less likely to graduate and consequently face severely limited opportunities . . . [including] poverty, poor health, and involvement in the criminal justice system. (p. 54)

Moreover, this study is intended to take a close look at the teacher-student relationships of a specific group of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) students in grades 11

and 12, and the relationships that are forged, nurtured, and built upon. In their website, AVID is implemented in more than 6,400 schools in 47 states across the U.S., plus schools in Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), Canada, and Australia. AVID impacts two-million students in grades K–12 and 50 postsecondary institutions (Resources / Resources-AVID History, n.d.).

In many cases, these participants will experience the same teacher over more than one year. How important and how relevant these relationships are to the participants' overall school experience is the primary focus of this study, specifically the importance of the teacher-student relationship as it pertains to student academic achievement, student social and emotional wellbeing, behavioral tendencies, and a student's willingness to attend school regularly. These four theoretical constructs would be examined in depth through the AVID classes and student responses to mixed methods analysis of qualitative and quantitative measurements.

AVID is a support class for students that is taught nationally and internationally. AVID's founder, Mary Catherine Swanson, founded AVID in 1980 in San Diego, California. Today, AVID is taught primarily in grades four through twelve. AVID's primary mission is to close the achievement gap for all students in their quest for college and career readiness. One example of the AVID program's success found that the senior class of 2014 outpaced (71%) that of the national average (68%) for enrolling in either two-year or four-year colleges the first fall term after high school. This success is remarkable considering the AVID student population is largely comprised of students typically underrepresented in higher education. Additionally, compared to the national average of 78%, persistence into year two of college by AVID graduates are consistently higher nationally due to the AVID students' *stick with it* attitudes. According to AVID's webpage, (Data / Data - Proven Results, n.d.), this persistency rate of about 84%

average from fall of 2016 figures includes all races and is particularly highest with the Hispanic population.

The researcher attributed this critical and impressive data to the students' motivation they received from their AVID teachers and the students' individual determination to succeed is school by applying the learning, study, and academic behavioral skills gained through AVID, thus succeeding in rigorous college coursework each year.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine if the AVID teacher-student relationship has a meaningful impact on the AVID students' abilities to successfully navigate their 11th and 12th grade years with improved academics, supported social-emotional wellbeing and dependability to attend school regularly. Ellerbrock, et al. (2015) explain that through establishing caring relationships with students, teachers cultivate classroom communities that propagate care and promote academic success. It is in these caring communities that educators demand excellence from every student. Letting students know they are capable of high academic achievement and expecting them to achieve fosters confidence in their academic abilities and is an essential part of the caring classroom community (Ellerbrock, et al., 2015).

There has been considerable research investigating the teacher-student relationship (Blum, 2005; Bernstein-Yamashiro & Noam, 2013; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Murray & Pianta, 2007; Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2015; Sabol and Pianta, 2012; Spilt & Thijs, 2011) and the importance that those relationships play in academics (Jacobson, 2000; Lamdin, 1996; Morganett, 1991; Pianta, Hamre & Stuhlman, 2002).

The researchers also emphasized the importance those teacher-student relationships play in students' social and emotional health (Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair & Lehr, 2004; Blum,

2005; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Klem & Connell, 2004; Phillippo & Stone, 2013; Watt, Huerta & Mills, 2010). When the teacher-student relationship evolves, students have a greater willingness to attend school daily and with a sense of urgency (Anderson, et al., 2004; Balfanz, Herzog & Mac Iver, 2007; Blum, 2005; Guthrie & Guthrie, 2002; Klem & Connell, 2004; Lamdin, 2006).

Despite researchers' extensive investigations of the teacher-student relationship in K-12 settings, there has been little investigation into the importance that the AVID teacher contributes to the teacher-student relationship. This perspective is vital to investigate because one of the critical traits that AVID teachers throughout the country must develop is connecting to their AVID students with family-like attributes (Teacher Effectiveness / Teacher Effectiveness, n.d.). AVID promotes teacher skills and behaviors conducive for academic success, stronger teacher-student relationships, and positive peer groups designed to provide a sense of hope for personal achievement gained through hard work and determination.

Sabol and Pianta (2012) explain that relationships with at least one caring adult, not necessarily a parent, is perhaps the single most important element in protecting young people who have multiple risks in their lives, and for many people this adult is a teacher. Mahoney (2015) explained that involved parents are those parents the teachers have reached out to beyond the normal school workday and made the extra effort to communicate and develop a relationship with to demonstrate true caring for the child to make a difference in the educational life of that child (pp. 126-127). Looking deeper into the teacher-student relationship from a content area/class—AVID perspective may give more insight to the importance of the family-like atmosphere that the AVID elective teacher provides to their students, thus validating the efforts for all teachers to appreciate a greater awareness in developing teacher-student connections. Further, as explained by Hansen (2018), outside of their parents, children spend most of their

time with educators, leaving the teachers as their most influential non-parent adult relationship for their children.

At the core of the teacher-student relationship is an ultimate outcome for all stakeholders. When students feel valued by a teacher that they connect with daily, the academic progress, social-emotional wellbeing, and student behavior improves. Teachers tend to have less discipline issues with AVID students and AVID students, especially minority students have greater success and self-efficacy (Pugh & Tschannen-Moran, 2016). Additionally, AVID student graduation rates increased in the AVID population while dropout rates decreased (Data / Data - Proven Results, n.d.).

Also, AVID graduates forge a college-career pathway, which leads to a successful and healthy student. Conner (2013) explains that, "As teachers are preparing 21st Century students for college and career, building a strong teacher-student relationship is essential for optimal student achievement . . . and constructing a positive and trusting climate [by] encouraging, and optimistic opportunities for all involved" (p. 40). Meanwhile, Jensen (2013) explains that a critical step in creating an emerging classroom is to build relationships and respect. Remember this aphorism: *students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care* (p. 23). Jensen (2013) continues to relate that that students who have positive relationships with their teachers experience less stress, behave more appropriately, and feel more excited about learning. Jansen (2013) continues to state that students almost always work hard for teachers they like.

Robert C. Pianta is perhaps the foremost authority on teacher-student relationships. His findings continuously restate the urgency in developing positive teacher-student relationships. Hamre, Stuhlman and Pianta (2002) write:

There is little doubt that relationships between children and adults (parental and non-parental) play a prominent role in the development of competencies from elementary school through high school years. Early on, such relationships form the developmental infrastructure on which other school experiences build, supporting adaption on the child within the school and home settings. (p. 91)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the significance of the AVID teacher-student relationship when taking into consideration a student's academic growth, social and emotional wellbeing, and how the teacher-student relationship influenced a student's school attendance. More specifically, a secondary purpose of this study was to examine how the relationship is viewed through the lens of the AVID student as it relates to their AVID teachers. The research intends to show the relationship of the AVID teacher's influence through their interpersonal relationship with their students sparked a greater urgency for learning, cultivated a safe environment for social and emotional support, established better behaviors, and motivated students' willingness to attend school on a regular basis. Finally, data provided would reveal that above benchmarks were met: Sustained and or improved academics, feeling supported socially and emotionally, and whether the AVID teachers influenced the students' willingness to attend school regularly.

Research Questions

The three essential questions this study examined focused on the AVID teacher's ability to develop positive teacher-student relationships with their AVID students. Specifically, how important has that relationship impacted student academics, social-emotional growth, and the student's ability to attend school regularly. The three specific research questions addressed were:

1. How is the AVID student's academic performance impacted by the support of
    the AVID teachers?

2. How do the AVID students behave socially and emotionally resulting from the AVID
    teacher's influence?

3. How has the AVID teacher impacted the AVID students' school attendance?

It is important to understand these three questions in greater detail because AVID teachers do play a significant role in the AVID student's tenure through junior and high school years, all of which may impact students' overall academic performances, social and emotional wellbeing and dependability to attend school regularly. In their study, Watt, Huerta and Alkan (2008) looked at AVID students' behaviors of high school seniors in the AVID class. They studied eight high schools chosen from Texas and California with a hard look at groups in four Texas schools and in four California schools. Their mostly qualitative study included student focus groups, teacher and administrator interviews, and surveys of teachers, students, parents, and administrators. Watt et al. (2008) findings reported that students who felt nurtured stayed in AVID; personal bonds with the AVID teachers were key to continuing in the program for four years. Furthermore, they share that the family-like atmosphere of AVID was important to students' morale, self-esteem and determination. School structural issues, such as scheduling, challenged some students yet they navigated their way around these barriers. Watt et al. (2008) continue by explaining that AVID students identified tutoring as one advantage to helping students remain in the AVID program. Administrators explained the strong middle school/high school articulation instilled in students the need for rigor and preparation for college. Watt et al. (2008) concluded that students who dropped AVID exhibited a lack of individual determination.

Watt et al. (2008) argued that it is vital to understanding the role, significance and breadth the AVID teacher plays in developing positive teacher-student relationship. AVID students were nurtured, enclosed with a family-like environment, tutored, and mentored to believe in the AVID program through feeder-school articulations. These attributes were factors resulting from positive teacher-student relationships.

To validate research questions posed, the researcher would employ a mixed-methods approach to explore first—quantitative research from a Likert survey to produce numerical data that could be put into categories (e.g., *Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree*). Then second, the researcher would use qualitative research to generate open-ended statements requiring descriptive responses from AVID students.

Theoretical Framework

In their website, Bowlby and Ainsworth (2015) attachment theory, a term coined by John Bowlby in the mid-1960s, is a concept in developmental psychology that concerns the importance of *attachment* regarding personal development. Specifically, Bowlby and Ainsworth (2015) made the claim that "The ability for an individual to form an emotional and physical 'attachment' to another person gives a sense of stability and security necessary to take risks, branch out, and grow and develop as a personality" (p.1). Therefore, as there is a human need to feel attached and secure, the teacher becomes key in securing the bond between teacher and student into place. Further evidence from Sabol and Pianta (2012) states:

>Although the conceptual framework for teacher-child relationship literature has roots in numerous lines of research within education and psychology, its original framework was perhaps most strongly influenced by attachment theory. The notion that child-adult relationships are central to children's development is largely derived from evidence that attachment between children and parents strongly influences children's development

(Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Sroufe, 1983), and the broad constructs used to define children's attachment quality have helped to identify the key components and mechanisms needed to form high quality relationships with teachers (Pianta & Hamre, n.d.). The attachment framework provides the basis for understanding that children form working models of attachment based on their early experiences with parents and other adult caregivers. (p. 214)

Significance of the Study

Currently there is no research that has examined the relationship between the AVID teacher and the AVID student as it relates to their academics, social and emotional growth, and the AVID student's attendance. This study is pivotal in determining the effectiveness of the AVID teacher's role in the teacher-student relationship by providing data for all stakeholders to examine, and by providing empirical evidence to support the theory that all teachers, especially AVID elective teachers, play a critical role in modeling for students.

It is important to recognize that while the empirical evidence from Pianta et al., 2002; Vitto, 2003 and others have all provided substantial evidence to support the relevance and significance that the teacher-student relationship plays in today's schools. Researchers have extensively examined how the teacher-student relationship impacts academics and social-emotional growth. For example, Ellerbrock et al. (2015) write that a caring educator supports the physical, psychological, and emotional safety of each student to cultivate a classroom culture where all students feel free to take academic risks. However, little research on a student to attend school regularly due to the motivation from the teacher-student relationship have been explored. Therefore, this study will also examine the relational aspect and the associated impact on a student's willingness to attend school daily due to the AVID teacher's influence.

The AVID program is designed to support and enhance academics, social and emotional growth, and attendance at school every day. Some of these key components that impact AVID's philosophies and methodologies include identifying students who are first generation college going, and those students who have a strong willingness to improve their academics though individual determination. Furthermore, even the nurturing and caring nature AVID teachers embrace for their students were characteristics that nearly all AVID students experience when in their AVID elective class. Moreover, the methodologies used daily by teachers within the AVID elective include time management and organizational skills, use of Cornell notes, and conducting Socratic seminars. These tools exemplify the AVID teachers' unique abilities to connect student learning and develop a new culture for learning in their AVID student population.

The embedded support in the AVID elective class is tantamount to AVID's success. Watt et al. (2010) describe this process of re-culturing in their study on teacher perceptions of school culture and climate in the United States. Watt et al. (2010) write, "This re-culturing has been identified by Guthrie and Guthrie (2002) as *AVIDization* in schools that [can] infuse the writing, inquiry, collaboration, reading strategies, AVID philosophy, and college-going culture into the school's everyday happenings" (p. 174). Therefore, schools that can provide an alternative course, such as AVID to their students, a course designed to support the whole student, and where teacher-student relationships are primarily paramount to its success, needs more exploring.

Nugent (2015) defines relatedness as a desire for students to feel close to the significant other people in their lives, including teachers. Relatedness is a bi-product of the healthy AVID teacher-student relationship. The AVID program's success depends heavily on the teacher-student relationship to create a sense of belonging and relatedness for the student, including the

embedding of the AVID philosophies to all students so they can achieve academically and in personal wellbeing, thus closing the achievement gap, all the while in a family-like environment. AVID's philosophies and methodologies that all AVID students and teachers experience together, are the foundations that foster a strong relatedness for all involved in AVID. As AVID teachers and students develop their interpersonal relatedness, magic occurs—grades improve, social and emotional barriers are hurdled and school attendance improves. The importance of this relatedness is explained by Ferguson (2014) who writes that relatedness occurs when a student completes a task because doing so rewards the student with a sense of belonging from an important person. In high school, students' relationships with teachers can profoundly impact their overall experience.

By looking closer at the teacher-student relationship, via the AVID lens, the researcher hopes to create greater insight and new knowledge into the correlation between the AVID elective class, teacher, and student to validate greater student success in academics, social-emotional growth, improved behaviors and everyday dependability to be at school. Theoretically, developing a strong teacher-student relationship would make a significant difference in any student's life. Spilt, et al. (2011) write:

> Furthermore, we understand why teacher-student relationships are important to teachers. [Per] theoretical models on relationships, teachers' emotional involvement with students in the classroom is driven by a basic psychological need for relatedness or communion. In fact, teachers may be drawn to the classroom in part, because here that need might be fulfilled. (p. 470)

Moreover, Bernstein-Yamashiro and Noam (2013) concluded that mounting research documents the importance of the teacher-student relationships in academic success and socio-

emotional development, an area ripe for more examination. Jacobson's (2000) research concluded that the negative experiences many students have in school can be avoided and counteracted when teachers cultivate sensitivity to the broader contexts of students' lives and use of teaching methods that values and supports all students irrespective of their group membership.

Understanding, applying knowledge and personal pedagogy to the craft of developing positive student-teacher relationships, is a skill that is built primarily from intrinsic knowledge, and later what one learns from trial and error over time. In their article, Cowley and Williamson (1998) explain that teachers had a much broader view of curriculum and saw it not only as content, but also as including professional development, pedagogy and student-teacher relationships (p. 1). However, if teachers understand the importance of developing positive relationships with students, outcomes would be positive for the student, teacher, school culture, and society in general.

Definition of Terms

To prevent assumptions and ambiguity of certain terms within this document, distinctions between what is perhaps commonly known or understood by some people would be defined as intended for this research and the meaning to define the intent of the terms being used. Since education uses a wide or broad spectrum of terms to explain theories and methodologies within the field, it is necessary to single them out as individual terms.

Academic Press: Phillippo and Stone (2013) explains that academic press refers to "The role breadth, or the degree to which teachers defined their roles to include the provision of various forms of social and emotional support to students" (p. 358). More specifically it is an emphasis on students meeting academic standards and on achieving academic excellence.

ACT: According to What is the ACT" (n.d.) the ACT is an entrance exam used by most colleges and universities to make admissions decisions. It is a multiple-choice, pencil-and-paper

test administered by ACT, Inc. The purpose of the ACT test is to measure a high school student's readiness for college and provide colleges with one common data point that can be used to compare all applicants. College admissions officers will review standardized test scores alongside your high school GPA, the classes you took in high school, letters of recommendation from teachers or mentors, extracurricular activities, admissions interviews, and personal essays. How important ACT scores are in the college application process varies from school to school.

AP (Advance Placement): In their article, Top 5 Benefits of Taking AP Classes in High School (n.d.), AP classes can be as challenging as introductory college courses. They are fast-paced, cover more material than regular classes, and require independent work like research and analysis. Getting a dose of a college-level curriculum early on could ease your transition from high school senior to first-year college student. Advanced Placement classes show admissions officers that you're ready for college-level work. Admissions counselors consistently tell us that good grades and academic rigor are the most important factors when schools evaluate applications. Many high schools give extra weight to AP grades when calculating your GPA. Taking an AP class and getting a B is often a better choice than getting an A in a regular course.

At-risk (Academic Risk): According to Partnership (2013), the term at-risk is often used to describe students or groups of students who were considered to have a higher probability of failing academically or dropping out of school. The term may be applied to students who face circumstances that could jeopardize their ability to complete school, such as homelessness, incarceration, teenage pregnancy, serious health issues, domestic violence, transiency (as in the case of migrant-worker families), or other conditions, or it may refer to learning disabilities, low test scores, disciplinary problems, grade retentions, or other learning-related factors that could adversely affect the educational performance and attainment of some students.

Attachment Theory: In their website, Bowlby and Ainsworth (2015) determined attachment theory as a concept in developmental psychology concerning the importance of "attachment" to personal psychological development. Specifically, it makes the claim that the ability for an individual to form an emotional and physical "attachment" to another person gives a sense of stability and security necessary to take risks, branch out, and grow and develop as a personality. Naturally, attachment theory is a broad idea with many expressions, and the best understanding of it can be had by looking at several of those expressions in turn.

A.V.I.D.: Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities (Our Beliefs / Our Beliefs, n.d.).

AVIDization: The infusion of the writing, inquiry, collaboration, reading strategies, the AVID philosophy, and college-going culture into the school's everyday happenings (Guthrie and Guthrie, 2002).

AVID PATH Training: These trainings, known as AVID Path to Schoolwide trainings, feature a rigorous curriculum that promotes student achievement at the highest levels and lays out a pathway to student success. Based on the teacher-developed, classroom-proven AVID College Readiness System, Path to Schoolwide trainings offer guides and materials for teachers, administrators, academic counselors, career advisors, and anyone who wants to help students fulfill their potential and successfully prepare for college. Participants will become familiar with AVID methodologies and learn what to anticipate when a school focuses its structures, processes, protocols, and systems to strategically improve performance of all students.

AVID Tutorials: Resources / Resources (n.d.) explains that AVID tutorials are a 10-step process divided into three parts—before the tutorial, during the tutorial and after the tutorial.

These three parts provide the framework for the 10 steps that need to take place to create

effective, rigorous and collaborative tutorials. Components for the tutorial process include: (a)

Students taking focused notes in class, (b) Students completing Tutorial Request Form (TRF),

(c), Teacher or tutor checking the TRFs, (d) Students are divided into collaborative groups with

one supporting tutor, (e) Students individual present a 30-second speech while other students

take notes, (f) Group members use inquiry process to guide the presenter student in clarifying

their point of confusion (POC), (g) Students rotate and repeat steps five and six, (h) Students

complete a written reflection on their learning, (i) Students turn in their TRFs, (j) Group debriefs

the tutorial process.

Bloom's Taxonomy: Learning Outcomes-The University of Queensland Search (n.d.).

Reports that Bloom's taxonomy is a cognitive model that can be used to help write learning

outcomes. It describes levels of achievement that can be attained across the domains of learning:

skills (psychomotor), behaviors (affective) or knowledge (cognitive). In 2001, Anderson and

Krathwohl revised Bloom's cognitive taxonomy. The revised taxonomy uses verbs to focus on

student behavior and the two higher levels of "Create" and "Evaluate" have been rearranged,

with "Create" now representing the highest order of cognitive function.

Classroom Immediacy: A broad term that refers to the different ways that teachers can

lessen the emotional distance between themselves and their students. Behaviors that create

classroom immediacy tend to engender positive attitudes in students (Thompson, 2013).

Collaborative Study Groups: Tutorial Search Results (n.d.) sometimes referred to as

Tutorials, in Collaborative Study Groups (CSGs), is where students identify a specific question

from a content area, collaborate to develop and deepen their understanding through Socratic

inquiry, and apply their new learning to enhance classroom performance

Comprehensive School: Comprehensive School (2018) reports that a comprehensive school is a state school that does not select its intake based on academic achievement or aptitude. This contrasts with the selective school system, where admission is restricted because of selection criteria.

Content Area: Partnership, (2013) relates that a now-preferred synonym for [single] *subject* or *subject area* among educators, content area refers to a defined domain of knowledge and skill in an academic program. The most common content areas in public schools are English (or English language arts), mathematics, science, and social studies (or history and civics). In some cases, traditional content areas may be combined or blended, as with humanities (typically a blend of English and social studies), the fine and performing arts (a blend of visual art, dance, music, and theater), or STEM (an acronym for science, technology, engineering, and math).

Costa's Level of Thinking: Costa's Search Results (n.d.) reports Costa's level of thinking helps students to better understand the content being presented in their core subject areas, it is essential for students to learn to think critically and to ask higher levels of questions. By asking higher levels of questions, students deepen their knowledge and create connections to the material being presented, which in turn prepares them for the inquiry that occurs in tutorials. Students need to be familiar with Costa's (n.d.) levels of questioning to assist them in formulating and identifying higher levels of questions.

Culturally Relevant: Culturally Relevant Teaching: Strategies and Definition (n.d.) states that culturally relevant teaching (CRT) is a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. This approach to teaching involves teachers building a bridge from students' experience at home to their experience in the classroom, bringing elements into their daily

learning at school, which validate their culture and make lessons 'hit home' because of those connections.

Culturally Responsive Teaching: Brown University (n.d.) states culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Some of the characteristics of culturally responsive teaching are: (a) Positive perspectives on parents and families, (b) Communication of high expectations, (c) Learning within the context of culture, (d) Student-centered instruction, (e) Culturally mediated instruction, (f) Reshaping the curriculum, (g) Teacher as facilitator.

Emotional Wellbeing: Ferron (2016) explains a positive sense of wellbeing enables an individual to be able to function in society and meet the demands of everyday life; people in good mental health who can recover effectively from illness, change or misfortune.

Empirical Evidence: What is Empirical Evidence? - Definition | Meaning | Example. (n.d.) reports empirical data involves the development of assumptions that pertain to the topic at hand. Analysts collect the relevant data and through empirical research, they observe how these data can prove or disprove their theory. The empirical data can be qualitative or quantitative. Qualitative data investigate the human behavior and try to explain, for instance, investor or consumer psychology. Quantitative data quantify the observations of qualitative data by using statistical methods, aiming to refine the research. Empirical evidence requires accuracy and integrity of the data so that the research is considered valid and unbiased.

Fundamental Schools: Weber and And (1985) report that fundamental schools differ from regular schools in that they are based on a cooperative agreement among administrators, teachers, parents, and students; teachers and administrators function as authority figures supported by parents; and the curriculum emphasizes discipline and the "3 Rs." The other

outcomes investigated included student self-concept and school and classroom learning and behavioral climates.

Hidden Curriculum: Partnership, (2015) explains hidden curriculum refers to the unwritten, unofficial, and often, unintended lessons, values, and perspectives that students learn in school. While the "formal" curriculum consists of the courses, lessons, and learning activities students participate in, as well as the knowledge and skills educators intentionally teach to students, the hidden curriculum consists of the unspoken or implicit academic, social, and cultural messages that are communicated to students while they are in school.

Likert Ratings Scale: Jamieson, (2017) defines the Likert scale rating system used in questionnaires that is designed to measure people's attitudes, opinions, or perceptions. Subjects choose from a range of possible responses to a specific question or statement; responses typically include "strongly agree," "agree," "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." Often, the categories of response are coded numerically, in which case the numerical values must be defined for that specific study, such as 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, and so on.

Philosophical Chairs: Chapter 12: Philosophical Chairs (n.d.) says that with a similar format to that of a debate, Philosophical Chairs is a [debate style] strategy—rich in inquiry—is built on a prompt to which contradictory positions exist. Participants address these positions through deep, academic discourse in a structured, formal process. The Philosophical Chairs process provides students with opportunities to improve their verbal capabilities and fluency, in addition to developing their use of precise academic and content language. Philosophical Chairs is also a form of team-building, during which a safe environment is formed that encourages students to take risks and share opinions with one another. Through the exposure of varied

perspectives, cultural worldviews, and personal experiences, students begin to appreciate the diverse nature of their classroom and see it as a source of strength and identity.

Pro-social Behavior: Cultural Context of Personality Theory and Research (n.d.) details pro-social behavior is defined as behavior directed toward promoting the wellbeing of another. Behaviors such as caring, helping, sharing and volunteering are encompassed under the category of pro-social behavior. Pro-social behavior may originate and be motivated by concern about the welfare of others and the rights of others.

Real Talk: A dialogue is "an instructor-led discussion based on a series of broad, engaging, universal themes to motivate student-oriented outcomes" (Hernandez, 2016, p. 18).

Relatedness: Nugent, P. (2015) state relatedness is some inherent need students must feel close to the significant people in their lives, including teachers or a reciprocity of factors like trust and empathy between two or more individuals in a relationship.

S.A.T.: What is the SAT? (n.d.) states that the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is an entrance exam used by most colleges and universities to make admissions decisions. It is a multiple-choice, pencil-and-paper test administered by the College Board. The purpose of the SAT is to measure a high school student's readiness for college and provide colleges with one common data point that can be used to compare all applicants. College admissions officers will review standardized test scores alongside your high school GPA, the classes you took in high school, letters of recommendation from teachers or mentors, extracurricular activities, admissions interviews, and personal essays.

Socratic Seminar: Chapter 13: Socratic Seminar (n.d.) defines Socratic seminar as the Socratic method of teaching is a form of inquiry-based discourse focused on questioning to spur critical thinking and drive ideation. It is through exploration, dialogue, considering new

perspectives, and constant questioning that students develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Through Socratic Seminars, students develop confidence in articulating their ideas to others while providing supporting evidence with reasoned thinking.

Theoretical Models on Relationships: Spilt et al. (2011) explain theoretical models on relationships specifically as they relate to the teacher-student bond, including self-determination theory motivation, attachment theory, and the need for relatedness. These models reflect data required to measure emotional involvement amongst teachers-students in the classroom as a basic psychological need to come together and bond relationally.

Pedagogical (growth): Pedagogical (n.d.), also referred to as *pedagogy*. As defined as the study of teaching methods, is a most important means for effecting education and upbringing instruction, the process of transmitting and assimilating knowledge, skills, and habits and modes of cognition necessary for the realization of a continuous educational process.

Personal Statements: Personal Insight Questions (n.d.), sometimes called *Personal Statements*. AVID's college going environment and teachings encourage all college-bound seniors to spend time on creating a personal statement. This process may take place in their junior year of high school as a form of practice. Many college admissions offices across the country require a sort of personal statement (insight) to whom the applicants are. One way to gain insight, hence value in helping to determine the individual they admit to their campus is a personal statement. Applicants will often have several questions to choose from and a limited word count to each question. The University of California college system explains personal statements as: These questions are about getting to know you better — your life experience, interests, ambitions and inspirations. Think of it as your interview with the admissions office. Be open. Be reflective. Find your individual voice and express it.

Restorative Practices: Restorative Practice (2017) states the fundamental unifying hypothesis of restorative practices is disarmingly simple: that human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* them or *for* them. This hypothesis maintains that the punitive and authoritarian *to* mode and the permissive and paternalistic *for* mode are not as effective as the restorative, participatory, engaging *with* mode. If this restorative hypothesis is valid, then it has significant implications for many disciplines

Social Competencies (Competence): Social Competence (n.d.) defines social competence refers to the social, emotional, and cognitive skills and behaviors that children need for successful social adaptation. Despite this simple definition, social competence is an elusive concept, because the skills and behaviors required for healthy social development vary with the age of the child and with the demands of the student's social and competency needs. A socially competent preschool child, for example, behaves differently from a socially competent adolescent. Conversely, the same behaviors (e.g., aggression, shyness) have different implications for social adaptation, again depending on the age of the child, and of the social context in which the child is actively behaving

Social Health: Social Health (n.d.) states that social health, [also known as social wellbeing], is defined as how a person gets along with other people, and a person's level of support from people and institutions around them. It also includes how well a society does at offering every citizen the equal opportunity to obtain access to the goods and services critical to being able to function as a contributing member of society

Stakeholders: Partnership, (2014) states that in education, the term stakeholder typically refers to anyone who is invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students, including

administrators, teachers, staff members, students, parents, families, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials such as school board members, city councilors, and state representatives. Stakeholders may also be collective entities, such as local businesses, organizations, advocacy groups, committees, media outlets, and cultural institutions, in addition to organizations that represent specific groups such as teachers' unions, parent-teacher organizations, and associations representing superintendents, principals, school boards, or teachers in specific academic disciplines (e.g., the National Council of Teachers of English or the Vermont Council of Teachers of Mathematics). In a word, stakeholders have a "stake" in the school and its students, meaning that they have personal, professional, civic, or financial interest or concern.

Teacher-student Relationships: Pianta and Hamre (2001), purport that the teacher-student relationship occurs when teachers form positive bonds with students, classrooms become supportive spaces in which students can emerge in academically and socially productive ways. Positive teacher-student relationships are classified as having the presence of closeness, warmth, and positivity. Students who have positive relationships with their teachers use them as a secure base from which they can explore the classroom and school setting both academically and socially, to take on academic challenges and work social-emotional development.

Verbal Immediacy: In the sum of all the interactions that you have with your students that draw them to you (Thompson, 2013).

Limitations

This study has the following limitations: (a) The data derived from this study is from only one public school district in the state of California; (b) of the AVID participants surveyed in grades 11 - 12, not all participated in the study due to absence or declining to participate on the

day(s) made available by the AVID teacher; and (c) while all AVID teachers were advised as to how to properly administer the survey, including directions for participants to be honest and unbiased, it is not known if those directions were extended to the participants prior to proctoring the survey, nor if the directions were met with fidelity by participants.

Delimitations

The delimitations for this study were derived through the three basic principles: (a) understanding the importance of the AVID teacher-AVID student relationship as it affects the participants' academics, their social and emotional outcomes, and their dependability to attend school regularly; (b) to gain a greater position on the AVID participant's point-of-view, as the researcher ensured only AVID participants would participate in this study; (c) exclusion of the AVID teacher for data as all data collected came directly from the AVID participants; and (d) the data derived from this study is from only one public school district in the state of California.

Assumptions

The researcher's assumptions included: (a) The AVID participants based their (quantitative) and (qualitative) responses solely on their individual contact(s) with their AVID teacher(s) over the course of their school experience from grades 6 through 12; (b) all AVID participants answered (quantitative) and (qualitative) questions with fidelity; (c) collected data measures perceptions AVID participants have of their AVID teacher(s), and the data accurately reflects the AVID participants' responses.

Organization of the Study

The research within this study is captured in five chapters. Chapter 1 examines several areas, including background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, definitions of terms, theoretical framework, research questions, limitations, delimitations, assumptions, and organization of the study.

Chapter 2 discusses the review of the literature, including connections, which detail the importance of teacher-student relations pertaining to academics, social-emotional behaviors and the students' ability to attend school regularly.

Chapter 3 explains methodologies used in the research study, including selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

Chapter 4 examines the findings of the study, including demographic information, testing the research questions, and results of the data analyses for the three research questions.

Chapter 5 details a summary analysis of the entire study, discusses the findings, implications of the findings for theoretical perspectives and practical applications, recommendations for further research, and conclusions.

Summary

Chapter 1 reviewed scholarly literature that teacher-student relationships are positively impactful for greater student outcomes in academics, social-emotional wellbeing and attending school more regularly.

The theoretical framework establishes a theory that a teacher who has a positive and nurturing relationship with their student(s) could indeed spark greater outcomes for said student's academics, social and emotional growth and school attendance.

The importance of this study is profound as resulting data may implicate that having positive teacher-student relationships may potentially benefit *by all teachers and students* to improve academically, socially-emotionally and attending school more frequently.

Chapter 1 explained the limitations of the study, including the study involving only one school district in California, and the delimitations of this study, which determined that no teacher influence or input would be included in the data for this study.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents the literature on the importance of teacher-student relationships in the AVID elective class, particularly grades 11-12. Peterson, Rubie-Davies, Elley-Brown, Widdowson, Dixon and Irving (2011), found that students show the greatest achievement gains when teacher take collective responsibility for student success and student failure, rather than blaming the students for failure. In his study, Peterson et al. (2011), utilized several instruments to measure student responses including focus group discussions. One finding from his collective focus group discussions included:

> Although recognizing they had an important part to play in their learning outcomes, the first thing students mentioned is six of nine student focus groups was the influence of their teachers. Students from all schools recognized their teachers were important for 'giving us knowledge' and 'giving us as much information as they can.' However, students were most focused on how student-teacher relationships impacted their motivation and ultimately their success:

> They [teachers] have to be able to relate to students, they have to have a good relationship with them otherwise it won't work' or as one student said, 'The teacher is not just standing up there and talking, they have to make you feel safe, that you can go up and ask for help.' (p. 6)

Moreover, Spilt et al. (2011) wrote, "For students, it is evident that the affective quality of the teacher-student relationship is an important factor in their school engagement, wellbeing, and academic success" (p. 458). This research study provides informative relational ties such as academic and social, that positively impacts outcomes within the educational setting for the participant. Numerous studies have been conducted on teacher-student relationships; however,

few studies have been conducted on a specific audience of a targeted, sub-group of students such as AVID participants.

The importance of developing a positive teacher-student relationship seems to be a silent antidote for improving a student's successful journey through their academic career. Relationships with significant adults are fundamental for children's intellectual, social, and emotional development (Pianta, 1999). Unfortunately, teacher-student relationships were seldom if ever taught in teacher credentialing programs. Most teachers must self-advocate for learning the importance of those relationships. Teachers find out very quickly the importance of student engagement. Teachers who do are typically rewarded with genuine, hardworking students, lower discipline issues, and greater classroom morale just to name a few. Corso, Bundick, Quaglia, and Haywood (2013) explained that when engagement is high and disciplinary issues were minimal, more of the teacher's time and effort is spent on promoting learning, and less on distractions. Student engagement has benefits for the individual students, teachers, and the entire learning environment. Corso et al. (2013) continued to state that the more students were engaged in school the more likely they were to attend, and eventually graduate from college.

Teacher-Student Relationships

This study seeks to demonstrate the critical need to have positive teacher-student relationships within the AVID elective classroom to validate student effectiveness and competence towards their overall educational experience throughout their academic and AVID tenure. Moreover, AVID teachers typically transform themselves into a mother-father figure that would hold the students accountable for a successful bid to graduation, college and career mentality. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the relationships of the AVID teacher-student relationship in the AVID elective class for grades 11 through 12 and how that relationship

impacts the students' overall academics, social capacity, behavioral and emotional tendencies, and if participants have overall improved school attendance rates.

Building a positive teacher-student relationship involves many hurdles that must be overcome before the relational piece is solidified. Many factors go into developing a positive teacher-student bond. The teacher, of course, must be the primer pin in developing that relationship. Gehlbach et al. (2012) also iterate that an abundance of evidence suggests that teacher-student relationships matter: how positive they are matters, how negative they are matters, they matter across numerous outcomes, they matter from one year to the next and they matter for students of different ages. Robinson (2018) wrote, "Great teachers keep their students involved, curious, and excited about learning. . .. They instill a joy for learning, for seeing class time and the work that comes with it as something to be anticipated rather than endured" (p. 166).

Archambault, Vandenbossche-Makombo, and Fraser (2017) said close relationships are characterized by open communication, warmth, and affection, and have been associated with increased participation in class and greater interest in school activities for all students, including students with behavioral problems. In contrast, Baker (2006) detailed that student-teacher relationships that exhibited conflict and discord have been tied to a decline in student engagement, and linked to unhealthy attitudes of school, including avoidance and disengagement in school.

Developing trust of one-another is critical, as is collaboratively working towards a social bonding and respecting each other's values and or motives. In his article, Kafele's (2014) example illustrates how working at teacher-student relationships could motivate a student to feel valued, and reduce at-risk tendencies, thus resulting in positive outcomes:

An 8th grade male student's challenging neighborhood, which was plagued by an

epidemic of gangs, drugs, violence and hopelessness. Despite those challenges, this

young man loves school. He's excited about the prospects for his future and the

possibilities because of his education. Why, because in 7th grade, after years of

underachievement, apathy, and excuses, the student met a teacher who made an indelible

impression on his life. Up to that point, he was at-risk of failing and dropping out. The

teacher forged a relationship with this young man and transformed his attitude about

himself by reminding him every day that he is great, he is special, he is extraordinary, he

is somebody, and the opportunities and possibilities for his success are unlimited. (p. 15)

As previously mentioned, developing trust of one-another is critical, as is collaboratively

working towards a social bonding and respecting each other's values and or motives. In their

discussion, Hernandez and Loebick (2016) explained motives for positive teacher-student

relationships through a tool known as "Real Talk." Hernandez and Loebick (2016) explained the

struggles teachers face is connecting with their students. How can teachers connect content to

students if teachers don't know them, their perspectives, or their interests? (p. 1). Moreover,

Hernandez (2016) continued to query—how do we connect with students who think we can't

understand their lives or experiences and who see formal education as a challenge? A Real Talk

dialogue is "an instructor-led discussion based on a series of broad, engaging, universal themes

to motivate student-oriented outcomes" (p. 18). Cleland (2016) also views trust as an imperative

for the teacher student relationship to blossom. She explained:

I argue that opening the school year by busting constructs creates a foundation of trust

and credibility that will push students to deeper levels of thinking, because they believe

you are making decisions based on what is good for them as students *and* as

individuals. . .. (p. 3)

Educational researchers agreed on many aspects of the importance of teacher-student relationships and the ultimate impact they have on both the students and teachers. However, within the AVID elective class, this relationship becomes acutely critical as many AVID programs across this nation have the AVID teacher following their cohort of AVID students through the middle school years. When students transition to high school, students are placed with an AVID teacher who may also follow them as a class through their four years of high school. Rasmussen, (n.d.) explain of a way to solidify the teacher-student relationship via looping—which is sometimes called multiyear teaching or multiyear placement—occurs when teachers are promoted with their students to the next grade level and stays with the same group of children for two or three years. This is just one type of model used by AVID schools that support the development of the AVID teacher-student relationship to allow the AVID elective teachers an opportunity to build capacity for multiple years of trust, bond and support for their AVID students, especially those at-risk. Jensen (2010) supports this thinking. He writes:

> One of the easiest and most successful ways to build strong relationships is to implement "looping," a strategy that keeps a cohort of students with the same teachers from one grade to the next. This practice builds a stronger family atmosphere and fosters more consistent and coherent student-teacher interaction. This "carryover" relationship is also academically beneficial: in the second year of the loop, the class doesn't have to start from scratch and can gain up to six additional weeks of instructional time. (p. 88)

Parker, Eliot and Tart (2013) wrote in their qualitative study about the AVID program in North Carolina. Their study looked at current and past AVID students and examined attitudes toward education and whether AVID influenced them socially and academically. Parker, Eliot

and Tart (2013) discovered four emerging themes, including family-like relationships were formed, student persistency to work harder occurred, AVID methodologies were used and prepared students for college, and AVID positively affected the students' overall outlook towards education. These four themes tie directly to how teachers build their relationships with their students. Usla and Gizir (2016) supported these beliefs in their research where they concluded that teachers' beliefs about their own ability to affect student outcomes are strongly correlated to student [outcomes] (p. 77).

Marzano, Gaddy, Foseid, Foseid, and Marzano (2009) explained that one of the more promising aspects of the teacher-student relationship is that it is not a function of what teachers "feel." Rather, it is a function of what teachers "do." More specifically, students cannot see in a teacher's head to determine the teacher's thoughts. They can't see if a teacher is having positive or negative thoughts about the class or an individual student. Moreover, Zehm and Kottler (1993), write that students will never trust us or open themselves to hear what teachers have to say unless they feel valued and respected. Zehm and Kottler (1993), also explained:

> It is in our relationships with children that we earn their trust. Once that they have decided that we are adults worthy of their respect, they will follow us wherever we might wish to lead them—from the Peloponnesian wars, Pythagorean theorem, and past participle to Picasso, Plato, and Pizarro. Most children could care less about what we teach as long as they feel connected to us in some intimate way. (p. 43)

The following literature analysis represents the literature and data germane to this research study, particularly the importance of the teacher-student relationship that builds over time to positively impact student academics, student sociability, student emotional and behavioral affects, and improved attendance and participation in school. Respectively, Chapter 2

is organized into four sections: (a) The positive impact of academics due to teacher-student relationships in the AVID program, (b) Social and emotional dynamics resulting from teacher-student relationships in the AVID program, (c) Behavioral patterns derived from the teacher-student relationships in the AVID program, and (d) Enhanced attendance and participation resulting from the teacher-student relationship in the AVID program.

The Positive Impact of Academics Resulting from Teacher-Student Relationships

Children and adult relationships play a prominent role in the development of competencies from elementary school through high school years. Such relationships form the developmental capacities, including school experiences, build supporting adaption of the child within the school and home (Pianta, Hamre, & Stuhlman, 2002). Further findings by Spilt et al. (2011) suggested it is evident that the affective quality of the teacher-student relationship is an important factor in their school engagement, wellbeing, and academic success.

Marzano, Pickering, and Heflebower (2011) see student engagement as the most impactful tool teachers can employ in their classrooms. Further, Marzano et al. (2011) also note a teacher's positive demeanor is the second and most general influence on emotional engagement. The teacher can communicate a positive demeanor in several ways, including enthusiasm and intensity, both of which have been associated with engagement and achievement. Thompson (2013) explained what a teacher's relationship with their students should be like. "Inspiring teachers who have positive relationships with their students have characteristics that should develop as quickly as possible" (p. 140). Thompson (2013) continues to include those characteristics as: Showing you care about your students; having thorough knowledge of your subject matter; taking command of your class; acting in a mature manner all the time and maintaining a certain emotional distance from students.

The most essential ingredient in forging a safe, supportive classroom environment would always be the quality and consistency of the teacher's sensitive rapport with the students (Doll, Brehm, & Zucker). McKibben (2015) related when students feel a sense of safety and order in the classroom, relationships can flourish. Jensen (2013) explains that the best way to start shaping students is to build strong relationships. When we like and respect those around us, we are naturally safer, and more positive. Morganett (1991), found that students want teachers to be interested in them personally and academically. In the classroom, students who feel accepted by their teachers are more likely to do what the teacher asks them (e.g., assignments) and less likely to do things that make teachers' lives difficult (e.g., disrupt).

Moreover, Sadowski (2013) writes about a group of immigrant high school students in New York. Sadowski (2013) stated, "In talking about their relationships with teachers, the immigrant students I met . . . had good relationships with some of their teachers and had relationships with other teachers that frustrated them" (p. 19). This scenario is relatively true for nearly all students throughout the land. It is hard to imagine any student having fantastic teacher-student relationships with all their teachers, all the time. Nevertheless, Sadowski (2013) says that virtually all students in the group he met had teachers that they believed played a crucial role in their success at school. Brown and Knowles (2014) wrote, "Researchers in one study discovered that showing care and respect for students 'promoted learning and overpowered the comparative effectives of instructional methodologies'" (p. 58).

Kafele (2014) explained that in urban school environments, it is essential that teaching and learning are culturally relevant and culturally responsive to the learner . . . students must be able to see how their learning that occurs during the day has relevance to their lives. This line of connectedness between teacher and student is critical for positive outcomes as Sadowski (2013)

clarified with students seeing direct correlations between their relationships with teachers and their willingness to engage with academic matter, or conversely, students would disengage when they do not connect with their teacher. Meehan, Hughes and Cavell (2003) in their study between the quality of teacher-student relationships and children's level of aggressions, concluded that the teacher-student relationship with African-American and Hispanic students serves as a protective factor for aggressive children facing increased vulnerability to later maladjustments. Thompson (2013) wrote about classroom connectedness and that behaviors that create "classroom immediacy" tend to engender positive attitudes in students because students believe that their teachers like them.

Brown and Knowles (2014) also described the caring environment needed for positive teacher-student relationships to flourish. Brown and Knowles (2014) wrote, "Teachers are responsible for creating the kind of interpersonal relationships with students that can improve the quality of learning" (p. 59). Furthermore, Glasser (1992) related that it was in his experience, as well as that with many other teachers, developing positive and healthy relationships with students not only encourages academic success, it also prevents discipline incidents. Marzano (2003) speaks of aspects that effective classroom management exhibits, such as rules, procedures and disciplinary interventions. Marzano (2003) explained that teacher-student relationships are the keystone for other factors. If a teacher has a good relationship with students, then students more readily accept the rules and procedures and the disciplinary actions that follow their violations.

The impact teacher-student relationships could have on a student is profound as Doll et al. (2014) wrote, "In fact, teacher relationships are more directly linked to motivation and academic achievement than are peer or parental relationships" (p. 17). More importantly, Doll et

al. (2014) detailed that the quality teacher-student relationships can influence students' social competencies, thus improve relations is a classroom. Erwin (2004) stated one of the most effective ways to help students meet their need for power in the classroom is to help them experience success through producing competent, or even better-quality work. Erwin (2004) later wrote; however, this relationship needs to be first forged through positive teacher-student relationships. Therefore, a student's motives to success in school become more valuable and tangible for them. In fact, Myers and Thorn (2013) report there are five motives that students unwittingly employ with their instructors to make their relationships with them more solidified, including relational, functional, participatory, excuse making, and sycophancy (p. 485). Myers and Thorn (2013) furthered the discussion in that:

> Students communicate for the *relational motive* to develop interpersonal relationships with their instructors. Students communicate for the *functional motive* to learn more about the course material and class assignments. Students communicate for *participatory motive* to demonstrate to their instructors that they are interested in the course and that they understand the material. Students communicate for the *excuse-making motive* to explain why their work is late or missing or to challenge a grade. [Finally], students communicate for the sycophancy motive to get on the instructors' good side or to make a favorable impression. (p. 485)

More conclusively, the teacher-student relationship could have a tremendous impact academically for a student as Burchinal, Peisner, Feinberg, Pianta and Howes (2002) found. Burchinal, et al. (2002) offered related findings suggesting a supportive relationship with a teacher predicted significantly higher reading skills for children whose parents endorsed more authoritarian and less child-centered parenting beliefs. Wentzel (1997) states that students who

think their teachers are caring pay more attention during class. Gehlbach, et al. (2012) found substantial evidence that the positive aspects of teacher-student relationships are associated with achievement and motivational outcomes.

In their research on teacher-student relationships within high performing schools, Conner, Miles and Pope (2014) stated that existing research suggests that teacher-student relationships matter greatly not only to students' performance in school, but also to their overall health and wellbeing. Meanwhile, den Brok, van Tarwick, Wubbels and Veldman (2010) examined the varying effects on the teacher-student relationships as it relates to outcomes with students of differing ethnic backgrounds. den Brok, et al. (2010) findings revealed that, "Outcomes from these [various] studies suggest that classroom belonging, participation, closeness and support, and control are all elements that relate positively to motivation, subject attitudes, as well as achievement or achievement related behaviors" (p. 203). Meanwhile, Calhoun (2000-2001) discussed how to prepare students for college and careers, but not for their present and future relationships. Calhoun (2000-2001) argued that students struggle in school because they cannot figure out how to feel comfortable in healthy situations or create a sense of belonging in school. As a result, we need to teach students how to have healthy relationships.

Developing a close teacher-student relationship whether being from high performing schools or various ethnicities, what matters is that a teacher-student relationship is formed to support the academic growth and wellbeing of the student. "Rather than attempting to forge close, confidential relationships with a few select students, we suggest teachers focus on sending messages of general care and respect to all their pupils" (Connor, et al. p. 39, 2014). Meanwhile, Phelan and Schonour (2017) wrote regarding the critical need for developing the relationship

between the teacher and student, including, "Teens are keenly aware of your interest—or lack of interest— in them. They sense who is on their side and who is not" (p. 206).

In developing these teacher-student bonds, the teachers and students need to build an engagement factor to validate the teacher's willingness for inclusiveness for their students, and an acceptance of the engagement from the students' behalf to confirm the teacher-student alliance. Corso, et al. (2013), wrote extensively on student engagement in the secondary setting. Corso, et al. (2013) believed the term student engagement is best understood in a way that recognizes students' internal thoughts and beliefs about being engaged, as well as their external experiences with various aspects of school life (e.g., academic classes, co-curricular activities, socializing). Furthermore, Corso et al. (2013), explained that the consensus among scholars in the field of student engagement is comprised of three interrelated models: engaged in thought, engaged in feeling, and engaged in action. Corso et al. (2013) further explained:

> Engaged in thought involves a psychological investment in learning and mastery of academic material; engaged in feeling refers to students' emotions regarding their relationships with others and the school environment (e.g., teachers, peers) and the general sense of belonging in school that comes from those relationships; engaged in action refers to the various activities and involvements in school that are directed towards learning and academic tasks. (p. 52)

Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004) are leading scholars on student engagement theory. Fredricks, et al. (2004) explained, "Teacher support can be either academic or interpersonal, although most studies do not make a distinction and many studies combine items about the two into one scale" (p. 74). Corso et al. (2013) wrote the individual student's interactions with teachers (and his or her peers), and the curricular content together with how it is delivered by the

teacher, are all key components in creating engagement. Conclusively, Corso, et al. (2013) applied their Student Engagement Core (SEC) model, which explained that the SEC model promotes positive relationships with the teacher, perceives class material relevant, and considers the teacher as an expert in the content and effective in helping students learn it. Thus, student engagement is highly likely. More critically, in a study that sought to investigate what relationship exists between teaching efficacy and cultural efficacy of novice science teachers in high-needs, high-minority urban schools, Moseley, Bilica, Wandless and Gdovin (2014) discussion revealed the final analysis of his data, which reflected a strong relationship between teaching efficacy and teaching effectiveness within the context of culture and student engagement. Moseley et al. (2014) reported:

> One major theme—the importance of establishing positive teacher–student
> relationships—surrounding teaching efficacy situated within the context of cultural
> efficacy emerged. Teacher–student relationship in this study relates to the establishment
> of positive rapport between the teacher and students that promotes student engagement
> and participation, leading to academic progress and achievement. (p. 323)

Impacting student achievement through relational connections is tricky at best. Some of the most skilled teachers of their subject matter still find difficulty in creating a connection with students. Korsmo (2014) notes that connections are not necessarily always about relationships. He related that relationships takes vast amounts of time to develop and often you will hear, "I don't have time to build relationships with all my students" (p. 48). Korsmo (2014) continued to state that connections, in contrast, are built in those moments when the teacher and student click. They can happen anytime—through eye contact, warm greetings, high fives, and honest, positive statements. In their student-teacher handbook, Schwebel et al. (2002) wrote:

Most important, [beginning and or new student-teachers] are free to develop a trusting relationship with students. You can do this with classes by acquiring a reputation of kindness, fairness, and consistency, and with students individually by showing an interest in them as people and by helping them learn. (p. 84)

Campbell (2007) asserted that teacher warmth increases student vocabulary and arithmetic achievement and that students who perceive that their teachers have favorable feelings of towards them have higher achievement levels when teachers have positive views towards them. Furthermore, although Connolly's (1995) research is a couple of decades old, it still applies here as he wrote that teachers' relationships with their students tend to be directed at foster control and compliance rather than establishing a blend of warmth, care, and compassion with an appropriate amount of firmness, realistic tolerance and competent teaching. Additionally, Robinson (2018) explained that your children's attitude to learning is affected by their feelings for their teachers: whether they connect with them personally, like or respect them, or want to please them. Robinson (2018) goes on to explain that the relationship needs to be reciprocal in that, "These feelings. . . in the moment is pertinent to how your children work with that teacher. That said, this is a relationship, and teachers' attitudes to your children are affected by your children's attitude to them" (p. 172).

Thompson (2013) explained the importance of making the classroom a risk-free environment. Thompson (2013) believed there is a strong connection between students taking academic risks and social inclusion by their peers. Thompson (2103) wrote, "Students who are comfortable enough in their classroom to take risks are students who are not afraid of being ridiculed by their peers. They have been taught it's okay to make mistakes and that it's okay to laugh at themselves" (p. 162). Pianta's (1999, 2008, and 2009) extensive work in teacher-

student relationships have been studied by others since the early 1990s. Most of his publishing; however, focused on early adolescence through middle-school age children. Nonetheless, his profound research still serves as a backdrop and anchor for understanding how and why the teacher-student relationships emanate from an early age. In one notable study, Sabol and Pianta (2012) looked at the recent trends in teacher-student relationships. They wrote, "Children with academic risk tend to develop poorer relationships with their teachers compared to more academically competent children, whereas positive relationships with teachers appear to be particularly important for children who struggle with academic demands in school" (p. 220). Sabol and Pianta (2012) referred to Decker, et al. (2007) work in their study of at-risk African-American students. Decker et al. (2007) wrote in their study:

> Pianta, Steinberg, and Rollins (1995) found that students at high risk for special education referral or grade retention, who were not actually referred or retained, had relationships with teachers that were less conflicted, closer, and more positive than did high-risk students who were referred or retained. Having a positive relationship with one's teacher may be a factor that promotes positive outcomes and ameliorates risk for students who may be considered at-risk for negative outcomes such as school dropout. However, having a negative relationship with one's teacher may further promote negative outcomes for at-risk students as well. (pp. 84-85)

Hinton, Warnke and Wubbolding (2001) relate that while there is no single reason for students dropping out of high school, the following were noted among the most common responses from students: a lack of connection to the school environment; a perception that school is boring; feeling unmotivated; academic challenges; and the weight of real world events.

Jacobson (2000) also details in her review the importance of teacher-student relationships relating to academics, especially when valuing diversity. Jacobson (2000) stated that in supportive learning environments, teaching methods used that appreciate and inspire students include being sensitive to students and in the case of developmental writing students, to clearly explain the basic structural components and terminology of the writing process. Jacobson (2000) continued to explain that, "Students are also challenged to reach their potential through one-on-one instruction that incorporates a form of mentoring. Additionally, creating a familial-type environment [where] student and teacher share a commitment to the student's success, supports students' learning processes" (p. 54).

The teacher-student relationship does play a role in academic outcomes as already expressed by the above scholars. The relationship is embedded in the scientific finding that teachers who develop a commonality or partnership with the student would ultimately affect student academic outcomes predictably in a favorable manner. However, Sabol and Pianta (2012) were clear to point out:

> In terms of academic outcomes, there is no consistent evidence that relationships can directly protect against academic underperformance or failure . . . which is not completely surprising given that early performance is one of the most salient predictors of subsequent performance . . .. Additionally, although it is posited that conflictual relationships may exacerbate outcomes for children with academic risk, there is little research in this area, with most studies focusing on the moderating effects of the positive aspects of relationships. (p. 220-221)

Social and Emotional Dynamics Resulting from Teacher-Student Relationships

Thomas Lickona (1991) wrote extensively on character development. In his book he explains the importance that teachers play in developing a character base for young students. He explained:

In the small society of the classroom, students have two kinds of relationships: their relationship with the teacher and their relationship with each other. Both have great potential for positive or negative impact on a young person's character development. Teachers have the power to affect the values of character of the young in at least three ways:

1. Teachers can serve as effective caregivers—loving and respecting their students.

2. Serve as role models—ethical persons who demonstrate high level of respect and responsibility both inside and outside the classroom.

3. Teachers serve as ethical mentors—providing moral instruction and guidance through guidance and explanation.

(pp. 71-72)

Stavsky (2015) examined four frameworks developed to identify skills, attitudes, and behaviors linked with long-term social-emotional development. Stavsky's frameworks have five competencies metacognitively central to social emotional development, including:

1. Intrinsic motivation (initiative, persistence, self-direction)

2. Critical thinking skills (problem solving, metacognitive skills, reasoning and judgment skills)

3. Relational skills (communication, cooperation, empathy)

4. Emotional self-regulation (impulse control, stress management, behavior)

5. Self-concept (knowing one's own strengths and limitations, believing in one's ability to succeed, believing that competence grows with effort). (p. 7)

Social-Emotional Competence of Children (n.d.) wrote that schools can actively develop students' social emotional skills by (1) creating safe environments; (2) being emotionally responsive; (3) setting clear expectations; (4) separating emotions from actions; (5) encouraging social skills such as greeting others and taking turns; and (6) creating opportunities for children to solve problems.

Moreover, the moral influence educators have on their students also has a profound impact on teacher-student relations, as Weissbourd (2003) wrote teachers' impact students' moral character development by not just being good role models, but by what teachers bring to their relationship with students, including appreciation of their perspectives, having genuine discussions of moral values, and helping to develop moral thinking. Meanwhile, Robinson (2018) explains that as parents, you have a big role in your children's social and emotional development, but there's only so much you can do yourself. Schools need to be places where relationships matter in the everyday culture of living and learning together.

Developing teaching styles and pedagogy to stimulate healthy social and emotional growth is a critical piece of teacher development. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) evaluated the aspects tied to teacher student relationships and the social-emotional component. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) related that, socially and emotionally competent teachers set the tone of the classroom by developing supportive and encouraging relationships with their students, designing lessons that build on student strengths and abilities, establishing and implementing behavioral guidelines in ways that promote intrinsic motivation (p. 492). Jennings and Greenberg (2009) continue to relate that coaching students through conflict situations, encouraging cooperation

among students, and acting as a role model for respectful and appropriate communication and exhibitions of prosocial behavior. Relatedly, Nelsen and Gfroerer, (2017) have found that by holding class meetings with their students makes their job easier because they gain a whole classroom full of problem-solvers. Students can practice the many meetings throughout the day to create a cooperative classroom atmosphere. Nelsen and Gfroerer, (2017) also stated social-emotional skills are not learned overnight any more than academic skills are learned overnight. Students learn and retain skills when they are practiced daily, and this is true for the skills learned in class meetings as for academic skills.

Additionally, creating a classroom environment that supports students' emotionally is also vital to establishing the teacher-student relationship. Morganett (1991) reported when teachers create classroom environments that are supportive, students are more likely to participate in classroom activities . . . feel accepted by both the teacher and other students, [thus] enhancing teacher-student relationships by demonstrating a concern for students' needs. Holgersson-Shorter (2010) also explained the plight of homeless students and the criticalness for the teacher-student relationship to evolve. She explained, "The strain of families as they face declining fortunes can be soul draining" (p. 31). The emotional toll on homeless students are vital for teachers and school officials to understand. Holgersson-Shorter (2010) also detailed the impact on both the teacher and student:

> Teachers and schools are the most common resources available to homeless kids. . .. Teachers of highly mobile students must develop the skills to make them feel welcome and they must rapidly assess new students' abilities, recognize emotional needs, employ a variety of teaching strategies, arrange for students to complete homework at school, and provide individual or group tutoring. They must play the role of social worker and match

highly mobile students and their families with additional resources. Moreover, providing

an atmosphere where the child feels safe and nurtured is the most critical thing teachers

can do. Effective teachers establish relationships and trust with homeless students whose

belief in themselves and the future may be stunted or badly shaken. (p.33)

While educational scholars have routinely agreed that one of the foremost needs to foster

student success for positive outcomes in academics and social-emotional growth, teacher-student

relationships are right up there. Marzano (2011) wrote on the importance of what teachers do in

the presence of students counts. He explained that:

Teacher actions help develop perceptions in students' minds that they have a good

relationship with their teachers. He further explains the four behaviors teachers can

employ on a regular basis that promotes these positive perceptions, including, showing

interest in students' lives, advocating for students, never giving up on students, and acting

friendly. These teacher behaviors can with rare exceptions, make all students feel that

they have a positive relationship with their teachers. Teachers should engage in these

behaviors daily, especially with their disenfranchised students, who are most in need of

positive support. (pp. 82-83)

In his report, Reichert (2015) found that "Relationally successful teachers describe a

repertoire of specific relational gestures to invite their students to join them in working

partnership" (p. 45). Additionally, Mercogliano (2008) makes clear that the relationship is the

single most important dimension of the educational process. All other factors, such as school

philosophy, structure, methods, curriculum, standards— pale in comparison to teacher

relationships (p. 28). Similarly, Fredericks, Blumfield, and Paris (2004) detailed, "When

children experience teachers as warm and affectionate [and] provide clear expectations, children

feel happier and more enthusiastic in class" (p. 578).

Additional research from Connor (2013) defined emotional engagement to mean students' affective reactions in the classroom, including interest, boredom, happiness, sadness, and anxiety. Finn (1989) defined student emotional engagement as a sense of belonging; a feeling of being important to the school, and an appreciation of success in school-related outcomes. The importance of emotional relationships is also made by Poland (2012) as he highlighted that feeling connected to school has been identified as very important to students' overall health and wellbeing. Sometimes all that is needed is for a student to feel that at least one-person cares whether [they] came to school today. Poland's (2012) assertion is supported by Roffey (2012) in that there is now a strong body of evidence to support the notion that social capital—defined here as expectations and interactions that promote trust, respect, value, and collaboration—impacts learning environment and the wellbeing of both students and staff.

As a source of learning for both the teacher and student, understanding the elements of the social and emotional dynamics within all educational settings is at best a learned skill set for the teacher and perhaps a subtly learned skill for the student. Johnston (2006) diagramed the existence of such phenomena by explaining that, develop relationships with students is a must. Johnston (2006) explained developing relationships in the classroom tells students a great deal about relationships. Some people call this the hidden curriculum—the curriculum that is not taught explicitly in a classroom or school. Marzano et al. (2011) explained deeper the emotions students feel, including if emotions are negative, we are less likely to engage in new activities or challenging tasks. However, positive elements associated with engagement, include: enthusiasm, interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, pride, vitality and zest. Marzano et al. (2011) also stated that

when students are engaged, they tend to experience enthusiasm, and alike when students feel enthusiastic or zestful, they are more disposed to engage in new behaviors and tasks.

Relatedly, the hidden curriculum in the school environment is vital to school culture and a form of communication. Pianta (1999) labels these unseen factors as language and emotion regulation. Pianta (1999) wrote:

Teachers spend a great deal of time and effort in the management and instruction of emotion regulation skills, especially links among emotion, language, and action. There are at least three ways teachers facilitate emotion regulation: (a) They teach self-control, (b) The child experiences a regulated child-teacher relationship and thereby acquires a sense of regulated experience, and (c) Teachers model emotion regulation. Many of these efforts are informal and oftentimes unintentional, and they are completely intertwined with teachers' relationships with students. (p. 165)

Therefore, the mixture of the hidden curriculum aspect explained by Johnston (2006), and the informal, unintentional efforts of teachers connecting emotionally with students (Pianta, 1999), forms the human aspects and or elements in the delivery of emotional connectedness for both the teacher and student. However, as the relationship grows between teacher and student, the teacher must pay attention that they do not inadvertently sabotage the relationship. For example, Fiore (2014) states that teachers need to create positive a school culture to sustain the relationship they build with students. Failure to do so creates great distance between themselves and their students and make it exceedingly difficult for students to develop relationships with them.

Moreover, when examining the social survival for students, Bernstein-Yamashiro (2004) makes clear that relationships with teachers are an important context for students' efforts to

understand themselves since they can provide personal validation and enable reflection.

Bernstein-Yamashiro (2004) continued to state students tend to look to teachers for confirmation

that they are good, can learn if taught well, and are unique individuals with outside lives and

challenges. Gehlbach, et al. (2012) contended that:

> One promising precursor to teacher-student relationships is social perspective taking—
>
> students' or teachers' capacity to discern the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of the
>
> other party, as well as understanding how the other part perceives the situation. The
>
> extent that students better understand their teachers' perspective, they may behave in
>
> ways that enhance the relationship (at least from the teacher's point-of-view). (p. 693)
>
> In their study, McNeely, Nonnemaker and Blum (2002) asked, "Why do some

adolescents feel connected to school while others do not?" (p. 138). McNeely et al. (2002)

explained that students enter school with a range of predispositions toward education and

varying levels of family encouragement to do well in school. Yet, theory and empirical

evidence suggests that schools can influence students' feelings of being cared for at school.

Meanwhile, Vincent, Lamb and Grove (2013) stated that additional research shows that a

student's positive connectedness and relationships with others in school has been shown to

promote student's psychological health. In addition, Blum (2005) stated, "Students are more

likely to succeed when they feel connected to school. Critical requirements for feeling

connected include high academic rigor and expectations, learning, positive adult-student

relationships, and physical and emotional safety" (p. 1).

Accordingly, Whitlock's (2006) study on contextual correlates of school connectedness

reveals a growing body of research that school connectedness is a powerful tool and predictor

of adolescent health and outcomes. Campbell (2007) carefully examined the various

components of securing a solidified relationship with students to ensure emotional and social wellbeing. Campbell (2007) found that teachers and students from different cultural backgrounds have historical and cultural differences that impact the social and emotional segment of the teacher-student relationship. Campbell (2007) concluded that if teachers and students are unable to understand and accept their cultural differences and behavior, the nonproductive classroom environment becomes an obstacle.

Vitto (2003) detailed that strengthening of social-emotional skills of students have shown to reduce aggressive behavior and violence, academic failure, chemical abuse and early pregnancy, and delinquency. In addition, Connolly (1995) illustrated the importance of the teacher-student connection as being even more critical for those students who enter the classroom with unmet needs and a variety of behaviors that interfere with their social-emotional development and academic achievement. Furthermore, Boynton and Boynton (2005) related that teachers must remember to treat students with respect to have it reciprocated. When students respect and like you, students will tend to want to please you—thus causing a greater likelihood of behaving better. Boynton and Boynton (2005) continued, "This is why it is so important to remember that, when it comes to student behavior, it is far more often the relationship students have with you than it is the rules themselves that encourages students to follow those rules" (p. 6).

Phillippo and Stone (2013) studied the teacher-student relationship as effected by student outcomes, teacher role breadth or the degree in which teacher defined their roles, including various forms of academic, social and emotional support mechanisms. "Because researchers have consistently found positive association between strong teacher-student relationships and students' academic engagement . . . and academic achievement . . . these relationships are often

understood as a powerful form of social capital" (Phillippo & Stone, 2013, p. 360). Specifically, teacher-student relations can have powerful results if the teacher's willingness to implement "academic press," defined as an emphasis on students meeting academic standards and on achieving academic excellence (Phillippo & Stone, 2013, pp. 360-361). Moreover, Phillippo and Stone (2013) found that teacher's social support of students was only associated with academic achievement if students also experienced academic press, and that press without support was associated with low academic growth, if not regression in performance.

Therefore, Pianta's career-long research on the teacher-student relationships and the associated behaviors have been invaluable to other researchers. Pianta (1999) explains the evidence influenced by children's teachers regarding emotional development. Pianta (1999) wrote that the teacher-student relationship, like the child-parent relationship, regulates emotional development for the student, including the interpretation of emotion, emotional cues, and the strategies for self-regulation. The social element within the teacher-student connectedness is also examined thoroughly. Pianta (1999) detailed that, "There is widespread consensus that the quality of social experiences for very large numbers of children (both poverty and higher income) accounts for links between life hazards and poor outcomes for children" (p. 9).

The range of social and emotional issues in education today is extensive. Most scholars do agree that emotional temperament impacts students' educational success both positively and negatively on the relational connection students have with their schools, teachers and peers. The social dynamics of growing up at an adolescent age and transforming into young teens, then eventual adults, transpires over a delicate time in the educational setting of youth's life where peer pressures, home dynamics and other external or internal social issues collide.

Behavioral patterns resulting from the teacher-student relationships

As previously discussed by Fredricks et al. (2004), the engagement theory influenced behavioral, emotional and cognitive traits. Fredricks et al. (2004) defined behavioral engagement theory as the idea of participation; it includes involvement in academic and social or extracurricular activities and is considered crucial for achieving positive academic outcomes and preventing dropping out. Moreover, Connor (2014) reported that teachers who put forth the effort to build positive relationships with their students will be compensated with students improving cognitively, behaviorally, and emotionally.

Classroom behaviors essential for learning include being responsive to the teacher and lessons, staying engaged, interacting effectively and appropriately, moving efficiently through transitions from one learning activity to the next (Doll et al., 2014). Staying engaged as a teacher and a student does bring challenges to the classroom, as not all students, nor all teachers, behave in a manner conducive to appropriate and healthy conduct while in the classroom. However, as Doll et al. (2014) explained when students are taught to monitor their own behavior and make decisions about whether and how the behave appropriately, it can significantly increase their academic progress. Murray and Pianta (2007) validated the empirical support for the teacher-student relationship as affected by behavioral matters. "Findings from numerous studies suggest the quality of the relationships that children form with teachers has important implications for their emotional and behavioral wellbeing" (p. 106). Furthermore, Murray and Pianta (2007) stated that factors that contribute to the teachers' beliefs, behaviors and actions include high expectation for student achievement, individual meetings with students and positive feedback and praise for students.

Pianta (1999) wrote that interpersonal relationship of teacher-student relationship plays a role in shaping the behaviors of the individuals involved—the relationship, through countless interactions, will regulate or constrain the development of the two individuals. Further, Pianta (1999) points out that interpersonal relationships (child-parent, peer-peer, parent-parent, teacher-child) are dyadic systems that play key roles in the regulation of child behavior within small social groups. Adding insight to Pianta's (1999) study, Schwebel et al. (2002) explained that, "In classrooms in which learners know they will be respected as students, validated as individuals, and treated fairly and consistently in all situations, a healthy classroom climate forms" (p. 198). Schwebel et al. (2002) also explained that this respect goes a long way but does not eliminate disruption or misbehaviors. Schwebel et al. (2002) concluded, "Students have few reasons to act out in anger or frustration with a teacher in such an environment. That does not mean students will not be disruptive and difficult at times. . . but discipline issues will be minimized" (p. 198).

Behavior matters in the classroom were not just for the students that were not disruptive to endure. Teachers too, must exhibit extreme patience and tolerance in managing their classrooms. There has been plenty of research on the topic of pupil and teacher wellbeing when referring to disruptive students. Roffey (2012) for example, examined the toll teachers and students take in classrooms where classroom management skills are less than desirable. First, student wellbeing is strongly linked to learning. A student's level of wellbeing at school at school is indicated by their satisfaction with life at school, their engagement with learning and their social-emotional behavior. But, Roffey (2012) also explained that teacher wellbeing is critically relevant for school wellbeing too, specifically in terms of having a stable environment for students. Likewise, Marzano (2003) confirmed that on average, teachers who had high-

quality relationships with their students had 31 percent fewer discipline and related problems than their peers.

Vincent et al. (2013), wrote that building relationships with students result in enhanced achievement, school connectedness and a reduction in negative behavior among other things. Ultimately, in having reduced behavior issues in the classroom and on campus matter. Vincent et al. (2013) believed that healthy relations between the students and teachers will flourish into better performances in the sciences, liberal arts, music, art, physical education, athletics, etc. for all the students. Vincent et al. (2013) concluded that time spent on relationships and establishing behavioral norms in the classroom results in not lower, but better outcomes. Moreover, Pigford (2001) speaks of other strategies to improve teacher-student relationships, including, for example:

> Eating lunch with students, greeting students at the door, challenge students in some mutual interest, join in school and community events, provide suggestion boxes, begin the school year with a personal letter, writing personal notes on students' tests or quizzes, recognizing when students have a problem, take time to attend student activities, give students a card on their birthdays, be warm and friendly and enjoy the relationship between the student and yourself. (pp. 338-339)

Conversely, in their longitudinal study, Decker et al. (2007) found that early student-teacher relationships marked by teacher reported relational negativity have been associated with student' behavioral and academic outcomes. Likewise, Goodwin and Miller (2012) found that if teachers believe that students need to be controlled rather than guided, they're more likely to implement discipline strategies that rely on punishment or coercion. Such strategies can create a frustrating cycle of misbehavior-punishment-misbehavior.

Hughes and Cavell, (1999) also prepared a longitudinal study looking at the teacher-student relationships on aggressive behavior of children. Hughes and Cavell (1999) found that positive teacher-student relationship quality attenuated aggressive children's subsequent levels of aggression as rated by teacher and peers. In other words, positive teacher-student relationships reduce the risk behavior of aggressive children. Since student behavior can be finicky for some teachers, Stipek (2006) feels that nurturing students via high expectations is the cure. She stated that being a caring and supportive teacher does not mean coddling; rather, it means holding students accountable while providing the support they need to succeed.

Furthermore, Vollett, Kindermann and Skinner (2017) looked at peer groups and how those groups were influenced by teacher involvement. Consequently, they found:

A wide band of teacher behaviors that promote student motivation and engagement, research suggests that central among them is teacher provision of pedagogical caring or involvement, which focuses on a constellation of teacher behaviors, including warmth, affection, and enjoyment, that mark a close and caring teacher–student relationship. One pathway through which teacher involvement seems to support student motivation and engagement is by fostering students' sense of belonging, relatedness or attachment to school. (p. 636)

Improving students' relations with teachers or their peers could be a task all of itself. However, transforming a student from a behavioral misfit to a productive, self-determined individual who wants to succeed could take a bit more of energy and capital from the teacher. Molding a relationship with behaviorally at-risk students to decrease behavior problems and increase their social skills, emotional strengths, and academic prowess is a tall task. More importantly; however, Rimm-Kaufman and Sandilos (2015) prescribe some solutions in how to

improve relationships with difficult students. First, Rimm-Kaufman and Sandilos (2015) recommend teachers develop positive discourse with students who have challenging behaviors:

> Be careful with what is said in class to difficult students, keep tasks and request of challenging students to a reasonable level and try to avoid badgering them as this may be perceived as picking on them. Instead, try to find a time and place where a positive conversation can ensure, mention and compliment positive behaviors they perform, and be patient with behavior modification change from the students being affected. (p.7)

Murray and Murray (2004) conducted extensive research on child level correlates of teacher-student relationships that examined the characteristics of their demographics, behaviors and academics. Murray and Murray (2004) found that having a supportive relationship with an adult outside of the immediate family has been associated with positive adjust among children and youth at risk of experiencing negative outcomes. Furthermore, Murray and Murray (2004) found teacher-student relationships serve as a protective buffering function and can promote adaptation despite adversity. Comparatively, Fowler, Banks, Anhalt, Der and Kalis (2008) looked at the association between externalizing behavior problems, teacher-student relationship quality, and academic performance in young urban learners. They found several research reports have identified the teacher-student relationship as a potential mediating factor in the behavioral trajectory of children in the early elementary years.

Moreover, Fowler et al. (2008) stated that children who exhibit externalizing behavior problems in early elementary grades who maintain a positive relationship with their teacher (despite teacher boundary setting and consequences for misbehavior) often experience an improved behavioral trajectory. Goodwin and Miller (2012) agreed with Fowler et al. (2008) in that research has found developing a consistent, school-wide approach to behavior expectations

does more than just reduce behavior problems; it can lead to higher student achievement and positive relations with students, thus leading to higher engagement.

Enhanced Attendance and Participation Resulting from the Teacher-Student Relationship

In research by Gehlbach, et al. (2012) they found in Fine's (1991) study that persistent negativity in relationships between teachers and students has been implicated in students' decisions to drop out of school. Despite the vast amounts of literature and research done in the field of teacher-student relationships and how those relationships impact such things as academics, social and emotional growth, or even connectedness towards being part of a whole school community, there is very little research that examines the relational connection of the teacher and student as a significant impact, or leading factor for students to attend school regularly. Changing absenteeism issues, Mahoney (2015) wrote, takes school improvements in structures, teacher instructional quality, interpersonal relationships with students, and collaboration between teachers and parents to ensure that students feel welcomed and important in school classrooms.

On a social level, Osterman (2000) found that when students are rejected from one's peers, a lower level of interest in school can manifest itself, thus, increase potential for dropping out. Lamdin (1996) explained that there is significant literature on correlations between attendance and academics. He also explained that researchers are looking at certain independent variables in the education production functions such as how, "The input measures can be categorized as student input variables or school input variables. The school input variables include the teacher/pupil or expenditure per pupil—affect student performance" (Lamdin, 1996, p. 156). However, this is not to say that the positive impact of teacher-student relationships hasn't been studied or reported on at all. Kearney (2008) in his report wrote that a school's

culture often serves as a catalyst for school avoidance behaviors. The presence of bullying, fights, discriminatory practices or language, as well as poor student-teacher relationships all contributes to the student's reluctance to attendance school. In their publication, Preventing Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy (2014), they suggested that efforts to improve school and community should focus on teacher-student relationships as well as the learning environment.

Roby's (2004) study on an inner-city school system in Ohio looked at attendance and how student achievement is impacted by students' willingness to attend school daily. Roby (2004) reported a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and student achievement in Ohio fourth, sixth, ninth, and twelfth grade levels. The correlation of student attendance and student achievement is moderate to strong, but was most significant at the ninth-grade level (p.12). Understanding the importance of daily attendance for students as it relates their overall resilience in their schooling is certainly a solid measurement and predictor for academic success and eventual graduation. Having students feel connected to their schools promote certain qualities as Blum (2005) explained, "Strong scientific evidence demonstrates that increased student connection to school decreases absenteeism, fighting, bullying and vandalism while promoting educational motivation, classroom engagement, academic performance, school attendance, and completion [graduation] rates" (p. 3). Furthermore, Blum's (2005) report outlined the seven qualities that seem to influence students' positive attachment to school:

1. Having a sense of belonging and being part of a school

2. Liking school

3. Perceiving that teachers are supportive and caring

4. Having good friends within school

5. Being engaged in their own current and future academic progress

6. Believing that discipline is fair and effective

7. Participating in extracurricular activities

(Blum, 2005, p.6)

Validating Blum's (2005) assessment was Gallagher (n.d.) who wrote on several issues impacting the social and academic outcomes of low-income middle and high school students. Gallagher (n.d.) found, "Common reasons for dropping out include low levels of family support, low academic achievement, poor relations with peers and adults, and low interest in academics" (p. 3). However, Gallagher (n.d.) concluded that, "Positive teacher-student relationships can impact students' social and academic outcomes, and thus reduce drop-out rates" (p. 3). Bernstein-Yamashiro (2013) agreed, "A lack of connection to caring adults at school is cited as a major variable of student alienation, failure, and disaffection from school and finally drop-out" (p. 17). In fact, Cooper and Miness (2014) research consistently found that many students drop out because of weak student-teacher relationships and pervasive feelings of anonymity and alienation in school.

Individuals create school connectedness by the time they are in high school, as many as 40 to 60 percent of all students—urban, suburban and rural—are chronically disengaged from school. That disturbing number does not include the young people who have already dropped out (Blum, 2005). In their key findings, Klem and Connell (2004) found that teacher support is important to student engagement in school as reported by students and teachers. Students who perceive teachers as creating a caring, well-structured learning environment with expectations are fair and more likely to report engagement in school. Klem and Connell (2004) concluded, "In turn, high levels of engagement are associated with higher attendance and test scores—

variables that strongly predict whether youth will successfully complete school and ultimately pursue post-secondary education and achieve economic self-sufficiency" (p. 270).

Many researchers seem to agree that whether poor or good, contributing factors to attending school rely on several issues including teacher student relations. In an Indiana Department of Education publication, entitled *Preventing Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy* (2014), their contributors posted, "The presence of bullying, fights, discriminatory practices or language, as well as poor student-teacher relationships all contributes to the student's [reluctance] to attend school" (p. 5). Moreover, Reeves (2008) stated that the research shows conclusively that attendance is strongly associated with student achievement. Reeves (2008) further relates that school and or teacher policies must uncouple grades from attendance. When attendance is tied to a grade, inevitably grades will decline. Reeves (2008) concluded that when schools improve grading policies—for example, by disconnecting grades from behavior— student achievement increases and behavior improves dramatically.

Watkins (2008) performed an exhaustive study on potential reasons why students do not attend school. Watkins (2008) findings were alarming, yet noteworthy to this study. Watkins (2008) found:

> Research into the issues of school non-attendance, truancy, and dropping out, has traditionally examined social, family, and personal variables that place students at risk for such behaviors. However, from [her] interviews with students who were previous non-attenders, it was apparent that the cause of their detachment from school lay within the school setting itself. (p. 12)

In Watkins' (2008) study as to what additional causes were attached to the non-attenders, she found that, "Deficient guidance or parental supervision, poverty and substandard living

conditions, and a lack of awareness of attendance laws as causes of students' non-attendance" (p. 13).

Conceivably, one of the most earnest studies on the importance of teacher-student relationships and student attendance was performed by Anderson et al. (2004) where they studied a concept known as "Check & Connect"—a tool that looked at relationships for promoting engagement in schools. Primarily, Anderson et al. (2004) had 80 elementary and middle school students participate who all had considerably poor attendance, an early sign of disengagement, while in their elementary school years. Essentially, adults at the schools studied, including teachers, administrators, attendance officials, counselors and parent volunteers worked closely with these at-risk students to determine if their grades, attendance and overall engagement levels in school would improve. "Furthermore, it appears that relationships between teachers and students in early elementary school have long-term effects on students' academic and behavioral outcomes, particularly for negative aspects of these relationships" (Anderson et al., 2004, p. 96). The authors noted that "Engagement involves positive student behaviors, such as attendance, paying attention, and participation in class, as well as psychological experience of identification with school and feelings that one is cared for, respected, and part of the school environment" (Anderson et al., 2004, p. 96).

The Check & Connect appears profoundly useful, especially in the early years of education for preventing lasting effects in damaging engagement activity for students in schools. Balfanz et al. (2007) also studied the engagement factor in middle school students and how it related to students' attendance in schools. Balfanz et al. (2007) explained that, "Student engagement . . . student's decision to not attend school regularly, to misbehave, or to expend low effort are all consequential behavioral indicators of a student's growing disengagement from

school and thus might be strongly predictive of dropping out" (p. 224). Klem and Connell (2004) wrote:

> Middle school students with high levels of teacher reported engagement in school were more than twice as likely to do well in attendance and achievement . . .. Knowing engagement is associated strongly with student attendance and academic performance, both as a resource (high engagement) and a liability (low engagement), how much is engagement affected by teacher support? (p. 267)

In other words, students who were not connected to school, to adults, to teachers and to social awareness in their lives at school, disengage from school mentally and thus, stop attending. Furthermore, Balfanz et al. (2007) wrote that, "Given that different factors impact attendance, good behavior, and effort, our findings strongly support the use of comprehensive school reforms that attempt to improve student engagements through many mutually supporting mechanisms" (p. 231). This validates the importance that teachers and other adults have in making relationships and engagement factors work in a child's early years of education.

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

It is vital to understand the relationship that is nourished between the AVID teacher and the AVID student. Primarily, the AVID teacher-student relationship, if fostered properly, is likened to that of a family relationship where the parent figure (AVID teacher) actively involves themselves in their students' (child's) life inside and outside the school. Although this relationship does not approach the parent level of "outside of the school often" relationship, it is not a far reach to see the AVID teacher behave similarly in support their students' activities or social events (after school) such as attending the student's band concert, soccer game or awards banquet.

The importance of AVID teacher-student relationships impacts the students academically, socially-emotionally, behaviorally and their dependability to attend school regularly. A student's academics are profoundly impacted by the teacher-student relationship. Pianta (1999) stated, "Instruction-oriented interactions with adults have the goal of increasing the child's skills in a particular area, these interactions nonetheless occur in the context of the relationships in which they are embedded—they are influenced by the qualities of those relationship" (p. 81). Similarly, Votto (2003) found that positive teacher-student relationships are a significant contributor to academic achievement and motivation and prevention of dropping out, bullying and violent behaviors.

The social and emotional toll that students would endure during their adolescence and teen years can be just as challenging as those of staying academically strong. Feeling connected to your school is also vital to the social and emotional outcomes. Blum (2005) wrote, "To succeed, students need to feel they 'belong' to their school" (p. 1). Pianta and Hamre (2001) found, "Once children enter school, relationships with non-parental adults, specifically child-teacher relationships, become increasingly important to classroom adjustment. Teachers play an important role in shaping children's experience in school" (pp. 625-626). Furthermore, in their study on school belonging, Uslu and Gizir (2016) related that, "Teacher-student relationships, peer relationships, family involvement at school are the respective significant predictors of a sense of school belonging among adolescence" (p. 63). School belonging is the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment (Goodenow & Grady, 1993, p. 80). Consequently, a lack of belonging in schools and classrooms, according to Cooper and Miness (2014), is associated with an increased

possibility that students will experience psychological problems, behavioral issues, and stress, and a stronger likelihood that a student will drop out of school.

As a factor of the positive teacher-student relationship, a student's dependability to attend school regularly has not been vastly researched. However, the research that has taken place has provided enough of a glimpse into that importance. Clearly, if a student is in school regularly, they ultimately at some degree would improve in their academics and social-emotional growth. Klem and Connell's (2004) research found that middle school students with high levels of teacher reported engagement in school were more than twice as likely to do well on attendance and achievement. Moreover, Anderson et al. (2004), using their Check & Connect model discovered that student engagement is critical for positive outcomes, including positive student behaviors, attendance, paying attention, and participation in class. Also, the psychological experience of identification with school and feeling that one is cared for, respected, and part of a school environment.

Ultimately, the relationship of the teacher and student has profound effects on the student, which could impact the student's ability to attend school regularly, thus creating a snowball effect of good fortunes, including greater social wellbeing, positive emotional health and feelings of connectedness to their entire school community. Katsikis, Goldthrop, Mahan and Smith (n.d.) agreed that putting relationships first creates a culture of caring, and mutual respect among all members of the school community. It is through building and fostering these relationships in all aspects of our work that we engage and empower students, staff, families, and community members to reach their highest potential. Watt et al. (2010) supported Katsikis et al. (n.d.) in that when they looked at schools with AVID implemented in them and how culture affected the school community. Watt et al. (2010) discovered:

[Regarding] school culture and climate, the researchers found that schools with proper

AVID implementation . . . exhibit more favorable levels of school culture and climate

than do schools struggling to implement AVID. . . AVID schools at the highest level of

certification, demonstration status, reported significantly high levels of culture and

climate than did non-demonstration schools. (p. 181)

Attending school regularly could also result is a greater sense of pride, self-esteem, and sense of accomplishment. Conversely, failing to attend school and making solid teacher-student relations may increase the risk for dropping out of school, deliver poorer health, development temptation to drugs, or crime, substance-abuse and or addiction—leading possibly to incarceration. Naturally these unfortunate consequences could occur with even the best attending students. But, by doing right and going to school—where adult and peer connections could keep a student engaged in social and academic thought, thus often avoiding the ill-temptations that non-attending students often cross paths with, could be extremely rewarding for a healthy and productive school-age student.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of this study was to test the theory that positive teacher-student relationships in the AVID elective class has impacted the AVID student's academic performance, their social and emotional growth, and improved overall attendance. This multiple-case study is a mixed-methods approach utilizing qualitative and quantitative tools for determining the findings within each variable, thus reaching a theoretical conclusion. In this research, the investigator followed Creswell's (2013) case study model to explore five suburban high school settings, over time, to gather data and to gain detailed and in-depth understanding that would chronical real-life anecdotes from participants, and use multiple sources such as interviews, observations, documents, focus groups and artifacts (pp. 105-121).

Setting and Participants

This study included 51 (10.87%) participants with six or more years in the AVID elective, 72 (15.22%) with five years, 145 (30.66%) with four years, 148 (31.29%) with three years, 35 (7.40%) with two years, 19 (4.02%) with one year, and three students (0.63%) with less than one year of AVID elective class experience (see Figure 1).
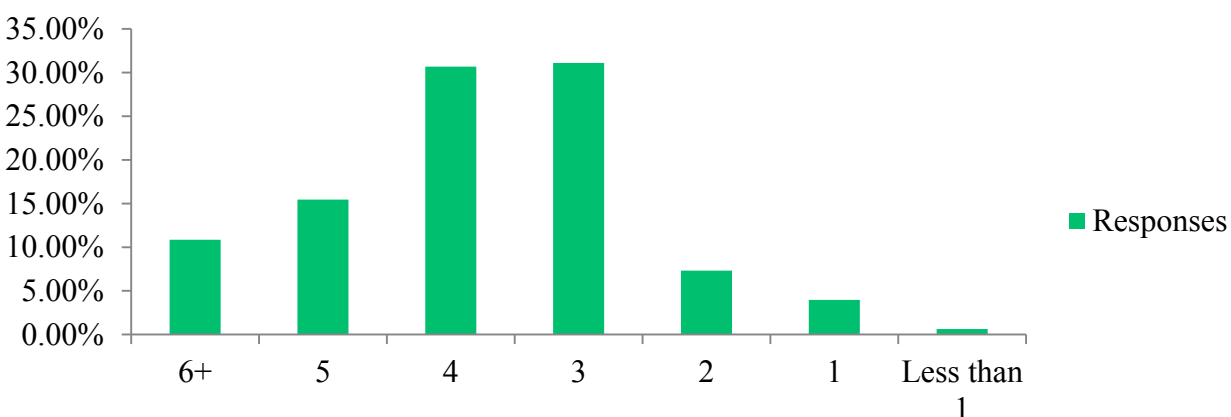
Figure 1. Years in AVID classes.

The gender of the participants includes 160 (33.83%) males, and 313 (66.17%) females (see Figure 2). The participants' average ages included 2 (0.42%) ages 20 or older; 159 (33.63%) students ages 18-19; and 312 (65.96%) students who were ages 16-17 (see Figure 3).
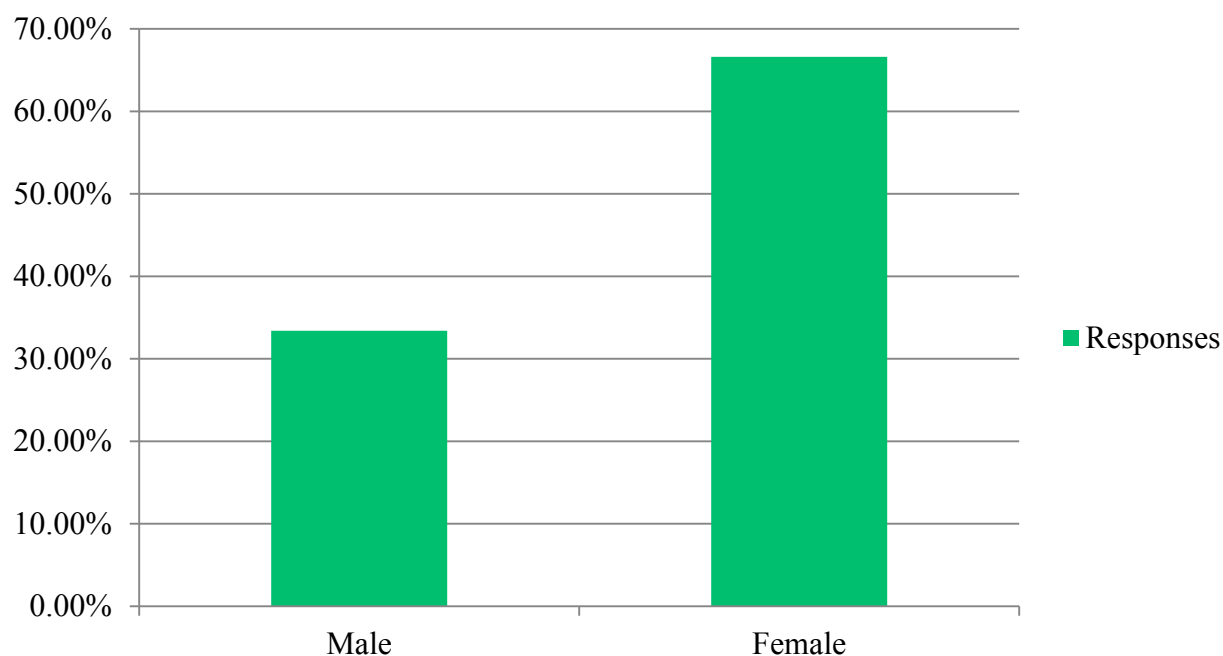
Figure 2. Gender.
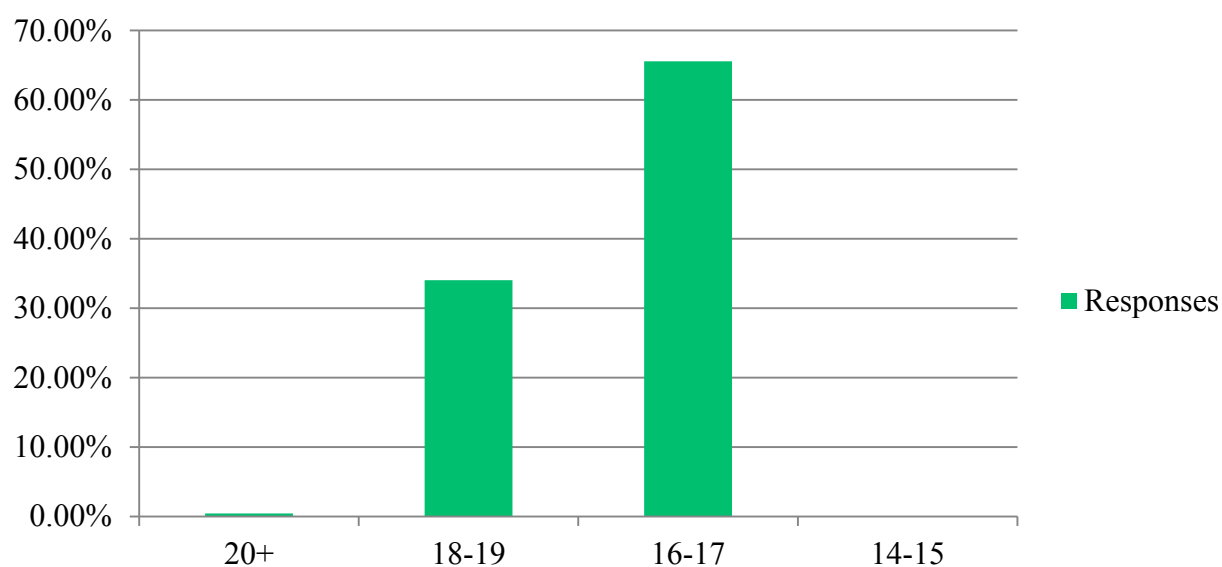
Figure 3. Age.

The ethnicity of the participants included 4 (0.85%) who are African American or Black; 10 (2.11%) who responded to Asian or Pacific Islander; 7 (1.48%) who responded as Caucasian or White, 450 (93.94%) who responded as Hispanic or Latino, and 8 (1.69%) who responded to Other (see Figure 4).
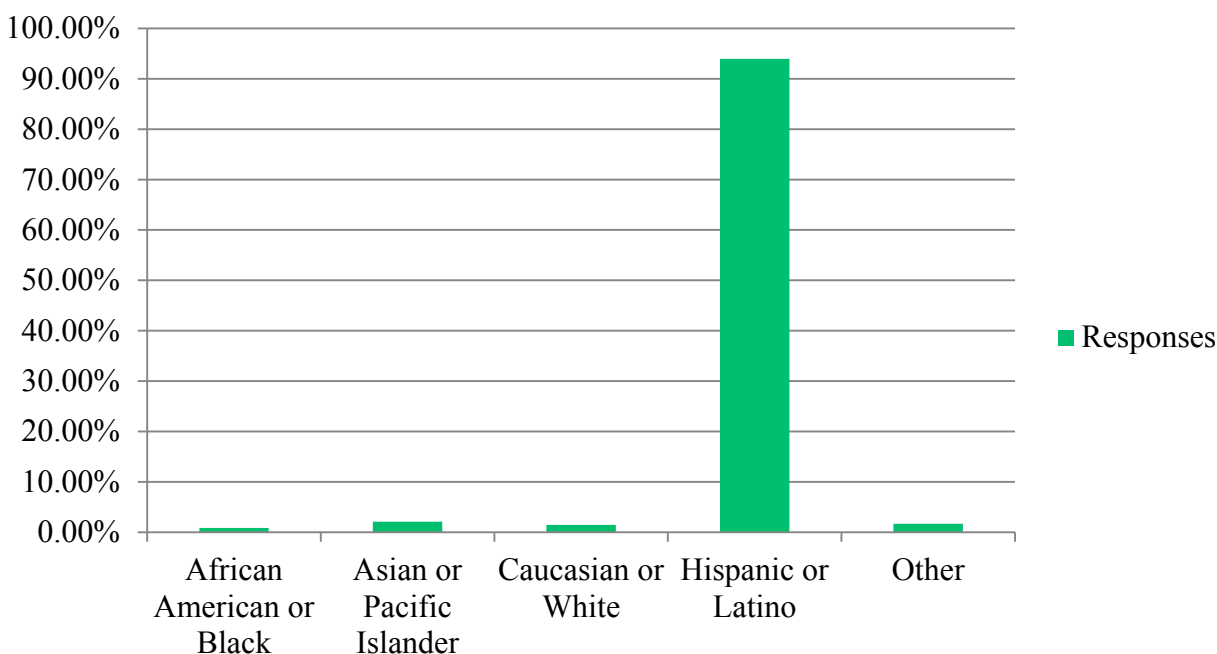
Figure 4. Ethnicity.

The participants represented five different high schools within the same school district, totaling 473 participants. High School 1 (HS1) had 90 (19.03%) participants, (HS2) had 98 (20.72%) participants, (HS3) had 93 (19.66%) participants, (HS4) had 101 (21.35%) participants, and (HS5) had 91 (19.24%) participants. One participant failed to respond to which school he/she was attending (see Figure 5). Furthermore, these participants included grades 11 and 12 AVID student-participants. The total 11th grade participants were 246 (52.01%), and the total 12th grade AVID participants included 227 (47.99%) (see Figure 6).

Figure 5. School currently attending.
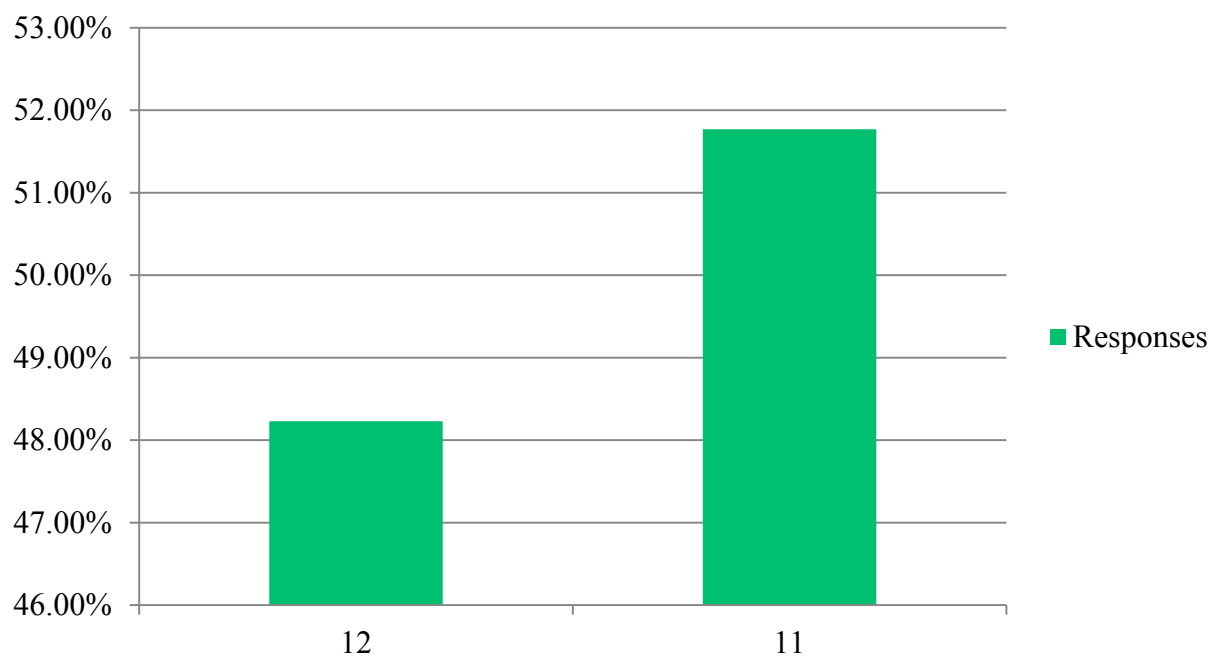
Figure 6. Current grade level.

Participants were also asked with whom they lived. Responding students who stated they lived with their Parent(s) 450 (95.54%), Family Relative(s) 12 (2.55%), Adopted parent(s) 1 (0.21%), Other 4 (0.85%), and Prefer Not to Say respondents were 4 (0.85%) (see Figure 7).
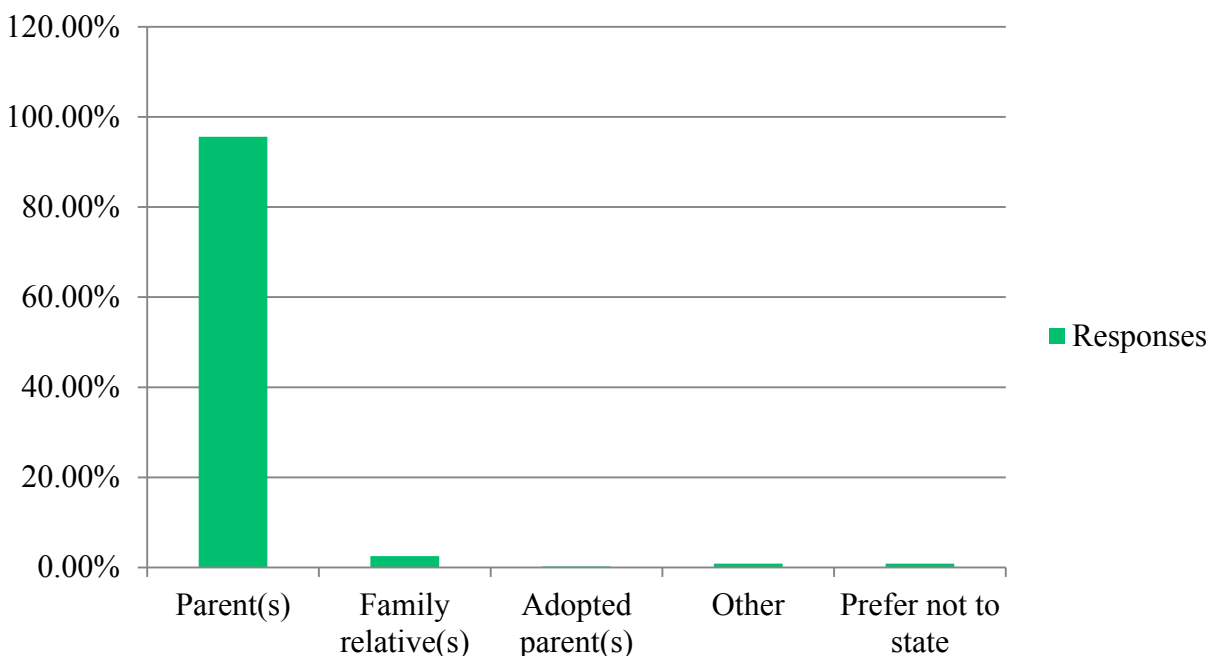
Figure 7. With whom do you live.

Sampling and Procedures

Lunen and Irby (2013) stated that because inferences concerning a population are made based on the behavior of a sample, it is important that the sample be representative, sufficiently large, and free of sampling error or bias.

The selection of the participants was mostly a formality. AVID participants, in grades 11 and 12 are an existing body. These participants also in theory have the most experience as a body of students, whereby many students by their 12th grade year would have experienced the AVID elective class at least four years, and other participants as many as five and six years in the elective class.

The participants for this study came from five of the seven high schools located in a suburban K-12 school district in southern California. This district, which is the seventh largest in the state, is demographically found within 24 square miles, and consists of approximately 52,000 students. There are 60 schools, including 36 Elementary, 9 Intermediate, 7 High Schools, 3 Educational Options Secondary Schools, 1 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Resource Center, 1 Dependent Charter School, 2 Early Childhood Education Programs, and 1 Early Learner Childhood Education Special Needs Development Center. The ethnic composition is 96% Hispanic and the remaining 4% consisting of White, Asian, Pacific Islander, African American, Filipino, American Indian/Alaskan Native and other various races. Approximately 60% of the students are English learners and 91% of the students are eligible for free and reduced lunches. (Quick Facts / District Overview, n.d.)

Participants who joined the AVID elective were selected from an AVID model that is designed to target students in the academic middle – B, C, and occasionally D average students– who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard. These students could complete rigorous curriculum but were falling short of their potential. Often, these students would be the first in their families to attend college, and many were from socio-economically disadvantaged families. Teachers, counselors, administrators and/or other faculty typically recommend students into the AVID program and the selection process usually involves an interview. Though AVID provides guidelines and expectations, final selections and processes were left to the schools to decide (Resources / Resources, n.d.).

In addition to the above criteria, participants in this study also came from a wide-range of identified sub-groups, including special education, English language learners, identified homeless or foster youth, and honors or Advance Placement (AP) designations.

The high schools participating in this study were three comprehensive high schools and two fundamentals high schools. The researcher, who is employed as a teacher in this district, did not have his high school participate in this study to support the validity and reliability of the case study and to avoid bias.

<div align="center">**Instrumentation and Measures**</div>

It has been stated that in qualitative research, the researcher brings a bias into the study. Patton (2002) reported, "The human factor is the great strength and the fundamental weakness of qualitative inquiry and analysis - *a scientific double-edged sword"* (p. 433). The tools used to validate finding in research vary from researcher to researcher and type of study to type of study. This researcher utilized instrumentation devices to measure subjects' qualitative responses and to measure quantitative findings. These instruments include Likert Scale Survey Statements (see Appendix A) and Focus Group Statement sheet (see Appendix B).

Reliability

In qualitative research, reliability often refers to the stability of responses to multiple coders of data sets (Creswell, 2013). In the instrumentation section, reliability is dependent on the researcher determining on an instrument or instruments to employ in performing reliability awareness. Creswell (2013) explains that reliability must be investigated also when scoring potentially subjective instruments are used. The researcher, utilizing focus group discussions to collect data is directly in the path of this criticism and subjective method since both interviews of participants and focus groups could be subjectively interpreted data.

Validity

In preparing the instrumentation portion for this study, the researcher considered several options and tools to perform the desired tasks. First is the validity of the measuring instrument,

including "content validity." Content validity helps to determine "the degree to which an instrument measures an intended content area" (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Maxwell (2013) explained:

> Respondent validation is systematically soliciting feedback about your data and conclusions from the people you are studying. This is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what the participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your biases and misunderstandings of what you observed. (pp. 126-127)

Moreover, this researcher confirmed information and checked for misinformation to avoid skewed data and began a process of thoughtful triangulation of the various sources, investigations, methods, theories to gain a great insight to the tested hypothesis that participants perform better academically, socially-emotionally and have a greater awareness of their daily attendance when their AVID teacher-student relationship is bonded.

In the process of performing the content validity, the researcher first extrapolated all notes, representations and statements made by all participants and had each participant validate and or clarify their remarks or thoughts from the interviews and focus groups. Each participant received individual emails (so not to contaminate the study with unintentional remarks going to the wrong participant) from the researcher seeking validation of their statements. Slight modifications and or adjustments were made for a few individuals and focus group discussion members who desired to clarify their statements.

The researcher, upon gathering of the total data, also conducted a peer review of the evidence (Creswell, 2013). This allowed colleagues in the qualitative research field to examine the evidence, bring forth questions to the researcher, challenge findings and or potential

conclusions, and orally explain to the peer reviewer the researcher's thinking behind the methodologies for collection of the data. Creswell (2013) argued that asking others for feedback on your conclusions is a valuable way to identify your biases and assumptions and to check for flaws in your logic methods.

Another tool employed by this researcher was the use of triangulation. Creswell (2013) explained triangulation methods as a check and balance, to validate the different strengths and limitations all support the single conclusion. The strategy measures risk that conclusions may reflect biases of a specific method, thus allowing understanding of issues you are investigating. The researcher performed a triangulation of the available data. Individual interviews and focus groups were compared and coded for similarities, differences, trends, and outliers as they relate to the participant's teacher-student relationship.

Subjectivity and bias on the researcher's behalf were also explored. This researcher, who has numerous years of experience as a secondary teacher and just as much as an AVID elective teacher, thoroughly understands and appreciates the importance of teacher-student relationships within the AVID elective for participants to prosper. In conducting the research, performing the interviews and evaluating the data sets, the researcher was extremely conscious of his bias towards the importance of teacher-student relationships and as such, monitored himself to ensure that objectivity, and not subjectivity was reported accurately. The recording of student voice assured integrity of the data and reduced the risk of bias.

Likert Scale

The Likert Scale rating system, named after its inventor, Rensis Likert, is the instrument used in questionnaires, and are designed to measure people's attitudes, opinions, or perceptions. Subjects in this study choose from a range of possible responses to specific question or

statements. The Likert survey asked participants' demographic data including: Gender, age, grade level, years in AVID, whom you live with, current school attending, and rating overall experience as an AVID student. Likert survey response categories included: "Completely Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Completely Disagree."

Additionally, categories of responses were coded numerically and were designed for this specific study to measure: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Somewhat Agree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, and 4= Strongly Disagree. The Likert scale also drew upon three separate topic categories, including: academics (10-statements), social-emotional (10-statements), and daily school attendance (5-statements). The academics, social-emotional, and daily school attendance statements were designed for quantitative and qualitative subject/student responses. Likert statements could be examined below and again in Figures 1-26.

Academic Likert Sample Statements

1. My AVID teacher provided high and clear expectations for my academic performance for all my classes.

2. My AVID teacher consistently engages me in meaningful classroom activities that are connected to real-world learning and experiences.

Social-Emotional Likert Sample Statements

1. My AVID teacher makes me feel welcomed and safe in his/her presence.

2. My AVID teacher explains why being social can support collaborative learning, and improve opportunities for networking with new friends or classmates.

Attendance Likert Sample Statements

1. My AVID teacher motivates me to come to school daily.

2. When compared to other teachers, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly from my AVID teacher.

Likert Scale questionnaires were sent to 480 participants via *Survey Monkey* platform. There were 479 participants who chose to voluntarily respond. Responses were auto-return upon completion to the researcher by hitting the "submit" button. Participants' names were not included, but students were asked to provide the last four-digits of their personal home or cell phone for unique identification. No participant had the same unique four-digit number within the Likert survey. Participants had an "opt-out" of the survey option. The AVID teacher for each junior and senior class participating was the facilitator of the Likert survey and ensured the integrity of the survey did not include discussion amongst participants while the survey was being conducted. The Likert survey was performed during the normal AVID class period, during the regular school day, and took less than 10 minutes of class time to complete. When completed, participants submitted accordingly. Each participant submission included teacher's name, AVID grade level, and whether a male/female participant. A follow-up email from the classroom teacher to the researcher indicated any abnormalities such as power outages, subject-to-subject conversations, internet connectivity issues, late arriving students, etc. (No abnormalities were reported). Participants who did not partake in the survey for the assigned day did not participate in a make-up session. (There was one participant who did not partake in the survey). Only participants of the designated five high schools and AVID classes on the day of the Likert survey participated in the Likert survey and potentially later in the focus group discussions.

Focus Groups

Kreuger (1988) defined a focus group as a "carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment" (p. 18). Twenty-four participants were interviewed. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say (Kvale, 1996). Therefore, this researcher, to ensure reliability occurred, maintained an audio recording in which was later put into a transcript for accuracy. Each participating school's AVID teacher in this study was asked to provide focus group members to voluntarily seek participants for the focus group discussions. The researcher required a minimum of one boy and girl each for both 11th and 12th grade AVID sections. More participants, if willing, could partake in the focus group discussions. The researcher arranged to meet participants at their school sites for ease of participant's mobility, either during the school day (with teacher and administrative approval) or after school. Locations for these meetings would be in the AVID elective teachers' classrooms or other approved locations such as a principal's or counselor's conference rooms. All participants provided Student Assent forms (see Appendix C) and Parent Informed Consents—English (see Appendix D), Spanish (see Appendix E). All participants received a five-dollar gift card to a local coffee shop as did the participating host AVID teachers.

Focus group discussions ranged from 22 - 34 minutes. The five focus groups received the same statements. Focus group members spoke primarily on their relationships with their AVID teachers over their years in AVID as it related to the teacher's influence on academics, social-emotional support and importance of attending school daily. Nearly all focus group participants had at least two AVID teachers in their tenure of AVID, thus at minimum the participants had the same AVID teacher for either one or two years over two years. Clarification

of statements were asked by participants and rephrased by the researcher upon request and were reported as such in the transcripts. Upon transcriptions of the audio recordings, the researcher offered participants of the focus groups an opportunity for verification and accuracy to clarify, add, omit and correct their transcribed statements. (No corrections were submitted).

Data Collection

The researcher utilized a qualitative and quantitative methodology, known as mixed-methods of data collection and analysis to determine the validity of the researcher's hypothesis: The importance of the AVID teacher-student relationship in academic improvement, social-emotional growth and importance of attending school daily. Only 11th and 12th grade AVID students partook in the study from the five high schools selected, as these participants would have presumably the most years of experience as an AVID student, (possibly from seventh through twelfth grade), thus obtaining the necessary data would be more authentic and measurable due to their time in the AVID program and ability to rate how their AVID teacher-student relationship developed over time. A total of 477 of 479 students participated and completed the qualitative and or quantitative measurements prescribed by the researcher. Two participants failed to complete certain statements from the Likert survey.

The plan for protecting the cumulative data involved several procedural steps. The Likert surveys results (electronic) and any other written documentations regarding this research would be securely maintained in a privately-owned locked storage cabinet in the researcher's home. All such documents would also be electronically scanned and saved on a secured/password protected USB device. The purpose for this secondary location is for transportability purposes only as the researcher may need to review the data in more than one location outside the working location of his office and or classroom. All said materials and documents preserved for this

study would be permanently destroyed, shredded and or deleted in a period of no less than three years post dissertation completion.

Data Analysis

Lochmiller and Lester (2017) explained whether you are conducting a qualitative or quantitative study, your analytical approach should be congruent with your theoretical or conceptual framework, aligned with your research questions, and directly tied to the methodology and the type of data being collected. The researcher would be analyzing the data by comparing means, standard deviations and or percentages in historgram format. As a hypothesis, the analysis would also compare groups with regards to years enrolled in AVID to determine if there is a between group significance with the various answers to the Likert survey, focus group and individual responses.

Ethical Issues

To avoid the appearance of conflict, the researcher would not survey any of his students from his school site. Although the researcher did use his site as a pilot to determine whether the instruments used would be effective in conducting the Likert survey. The researcher was present during all focus interviews, took clarified questions of the selected statements should focus group participants have any.

The university Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the student/participant consent form (Appendix D and E). The researcher also received National Institute of Health (NIH) approval (see Appendix F).

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the plan the researcher used to follow as he pursued the data to validate the hypothesis that AVID teacher-student relationships could improve participant's

academics, address social-emotional wellbeing much greater and improve participant's attendance. The chapter restated the purpose of the research and presented the research questions. The participants were selected as an entire population for the quantitative efforts and selectively chosen by their AVID teachers for the qualitative pieces. The selection of the 479 participants were discussed. Validity and reliability instrumentations were also presented. Data collection procedures were discussed as was the methods for data analysis for each of the research questions. Results of the data analysis would be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This study investigated the teacher-student relationship in the AVID elective class for grades 11 and 12. The investigation focused on three main areas that impact student success: Academics, social-emotional growth and daily attendance. The researcher utilized a large sampling of AVID 11th and 12th grade AVID participants from five comprehensive high schools within one school district. These participants answered 25 Likert survey statements— 10 statements regarding academics, 10 statements regarding social and emotional growth, and finally, five statements regarding their daily school attendance. Further data was secured from chosen participants in smaller school site focus groups for discussions. In these focus groups, each participant answered orally five pre-determined statements, which were already posed on the Likert survey, thus allowing the researcher to draw a triangulation of analysis and consistency to already answered Likert statements. The purpose of this study was achieved by examining the responses participants made in both the Likert survey and focus group oral responses. This chapter presents the data analysis for discovery of the answers to the research questions:

1. How is the AVID student's academic performance impacted by the support from the AVID teachers?

2. How do the AVID students behave socially and emotionally resulting from the AVID teacher's influence?

3. How has the AVID teacher impacted the AVID students' school attendance?

Quantitative Data Analysis

Likert Survey Results: Academic

Statements 1-10 asked participants about how their AVID teacher(s) may have impacted their academic success. Participants had varying years of AVID experience and more than one AVID teacher during their tenure in AVID to competently respond to the statements posed.

AVID students understand that AVID teachers provide support to all their academic needs, not just the AVID elective class. The implied intent of the statement, *The AVID teachers provide academic support for me*, looked at the overall support from their AVID teacher(s) for all the students' classes, not just the AVID elective class. The results revealed that 478 participants answered the question. There were 313 (65.48%) participants who Completely Agreed, 161 (33.68%) who Agreed, four (0.84%) who Disagreed, and (0%) zero participants Completely Disagreed. There was one participant who did not respond. Therefore, 472 (99.16%) of participants agreed or completely agreed that their AVID teachers have provided academic support to them (see Figure 8).
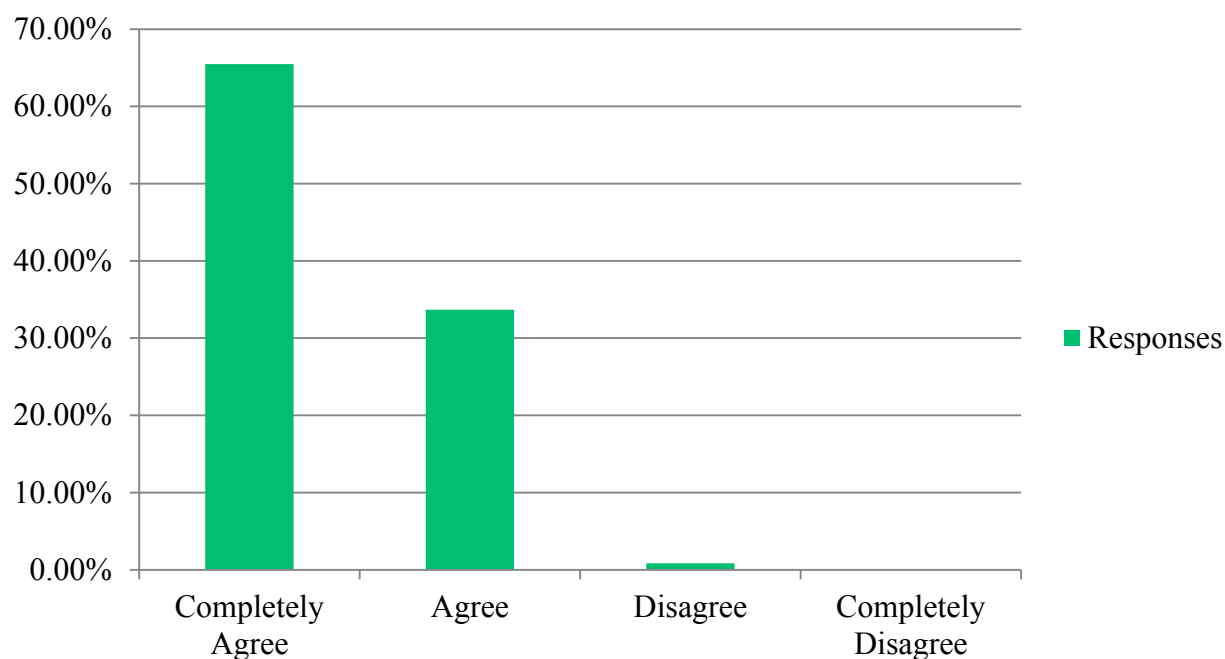
Figure 8. The AVID teachers provide academic support for me?

In the statement: *The AVID teachers offer alternative opportunities to learn various subject matter* allowed AVID students to examine whether their AVID teachers provide alternative means, strategies, theories, etc., to help them engage and or solve complex problems they encounter in their everyday classes and or coursework. Responding participants, 226 (47.28%) Completely Agreed, 234 (48.95%) Agreed, 17 (3.56%) Disagreed, and one (0.21%) Completely Disagreed. Overall 460 (96.23%) of participants completely agreed or agreed that their AVID teachers provided alternative opportunities to learn various subject matter. (see Figure 9).

AVID instructors are trained to vary the information and data they teach to students. By showing alternative ways to learn any topic, the students experience a wider range of learned knowledge and discover various options for learning. More importantly, participants have an opportunity to experience a learning style, for example visual, audio or tactile, that best meets their individual needs. Therefore, in the statement: *The AVID teachers present academic information in a way that is understandable for meaningful learning,* showed responding participants, 269 (56.16%) Completely Agreed, 200 (41.75%) Agreed, 10 (2.09%) Disagreed and (0%) zero participants Completely Disagreed. Overall, 479 participants responded with (96.23%) of the participants believing favorably that their AVID teachers provide academic information in an understandable and meaningful manner (see Figure 10).
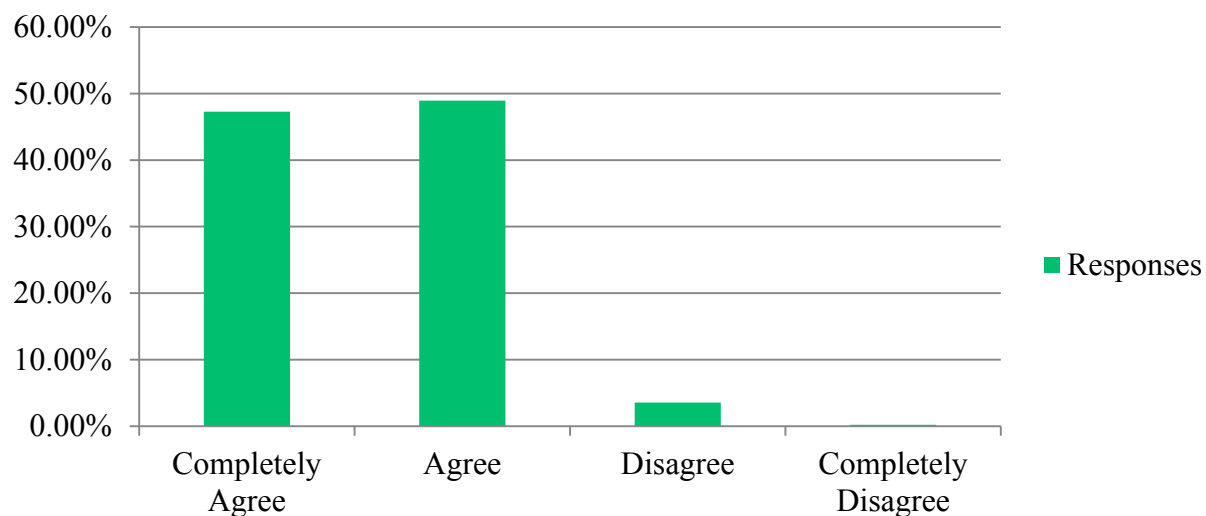
Figure 9. The AVID teacher offers alternative opportunities to learn various subject matter?
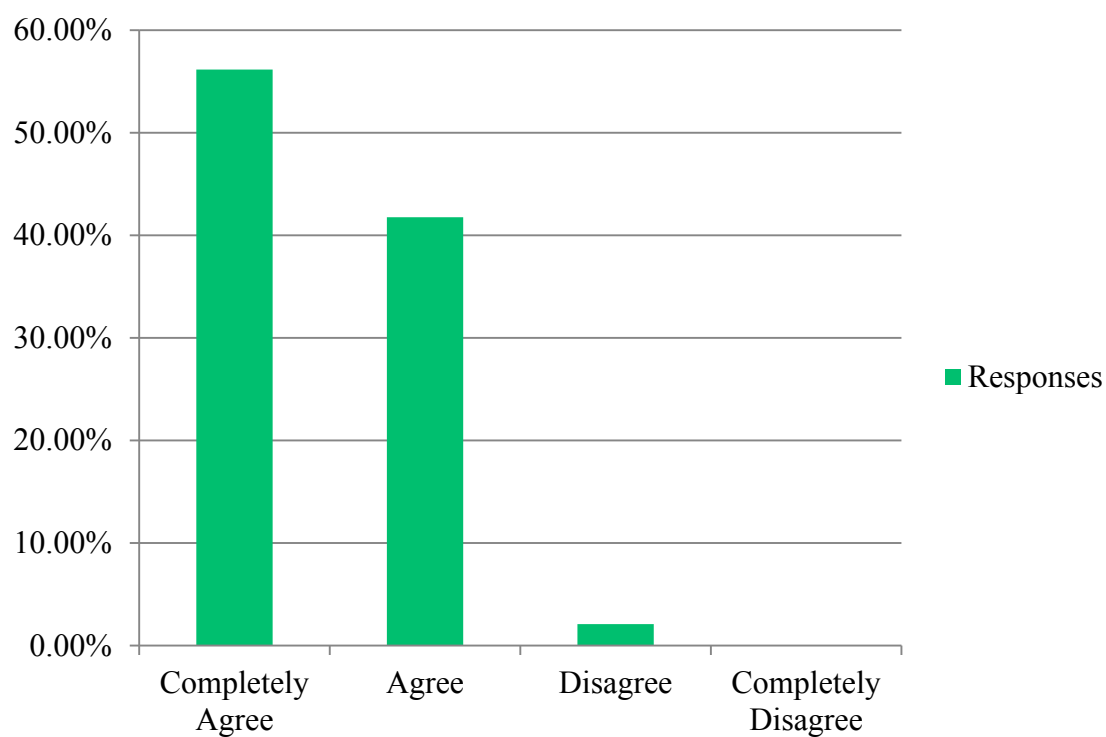
Figure 10. The AVID teachers present academic information in a way that is understandable for meaningful learning.

Students would often succeed when they have teachers who inspire and motivate them to do their best. In the statement: *The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in my classes,* allows the participants to decide whether their AVID teachers inspire them to learn. Moreover, it is especially important AVID students embrace AVID teachers who motivate them to give their best efforts towards their learning abilities for all their classes. Responding participants 310 (65.13%) Completely Agreed, 150 (31.51%) Agreed, 15 (3.15%) Disagreed and one (0.21%) participant Completely Disagreed. Clearly, 460 (96.64%) participants responded favorably that their AVID teachers do indeed motivate them to give their best efforts in their classes (see Figure 11).
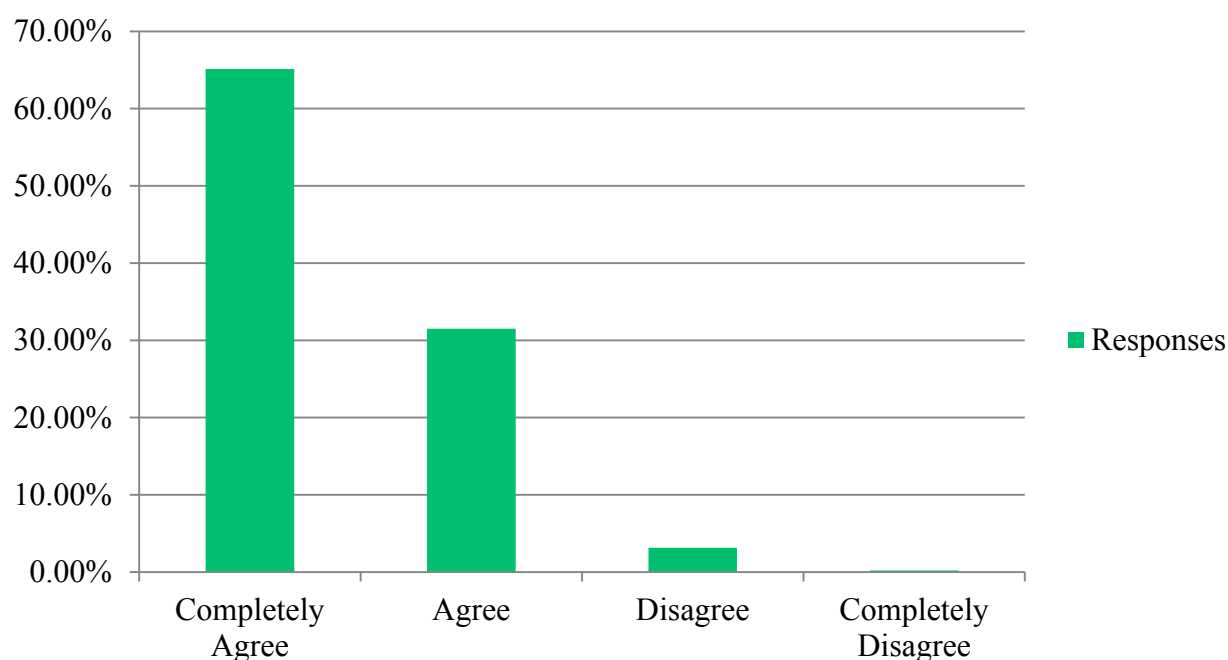
Figure 11. The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in my classes.

Teacher criticism of student work is a vital component to effective teaching and learning. AVID teachers (and AVID tutors) frequently give constructive feedback on assignments done within the AVID class. This feedback is often a two-way communication whereby the AVID

teachers would pose, for example, a question that requires the AVID student to ponder using Bloom's Taxonomy or Costa's Level of Thinking. In the statement: *The AVID teachers provide constructive feedback on assignments,* responding participants 237 (49.69%) Completely Agreed, 202 (42.35%) Agreed, 37 (7.76%) Disagreed and one (0.21%) Completely Disagreed. Therefore, 439 (92.04%) of participants found favorably that their AVID teachers did indeed provide constructive feedback on assignments (see Figure 12).
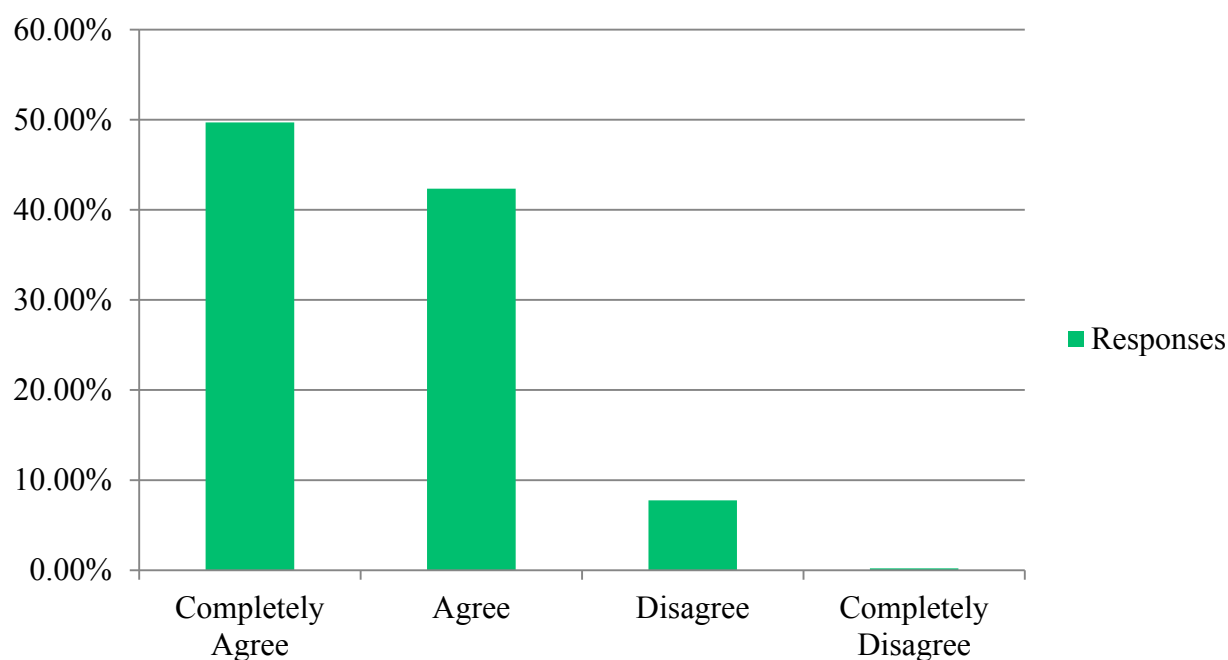
Figure 12. The AVID teachers provide constructive feedback on assignments.

One of the keys to AVID's success are the academic expectations AVID teachers have for their students. These expectations, for example, include completion of assignments (on-time) in all classes and that students tackle their own levels of rigor while approaching college readiness status are paramount to the AVID participants' future academic successes. The statement: *The AVID teachers provided clear expectations for my academic performance* showed that responding participants 290 (60.80%) Completely Agreed, 180 (37.74%) Agreed, 6 (1.26%) Disagreed and one (0.21%) Completely Disagreed. In total, 470 (98.54%) participants

overwhelmingly agreed that their AVID teachers do provide clear expectations for their academic performances (see Figure 13).
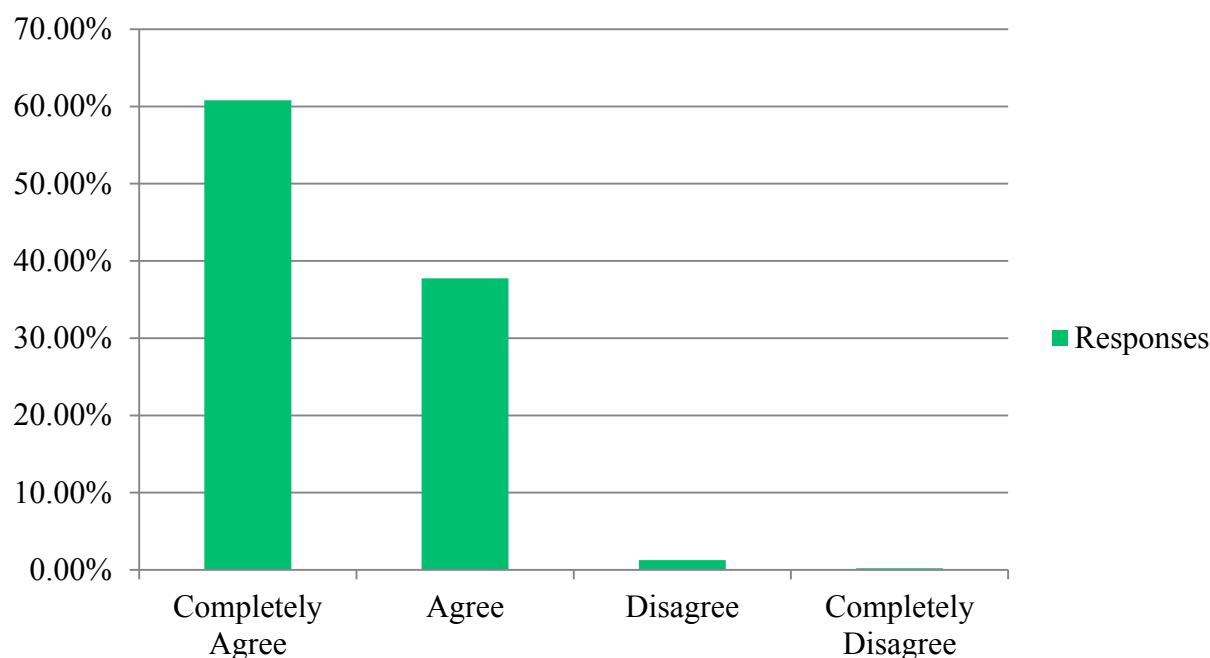
Figure 13. The AVID teachers provide clear expectations for my academic performance.

In (Figure 14) question seven states: *The AVID teachers consistently engage me in real-world learning experiences.* AVID teachers would draw from students' real-world encounters to guide them in their overall learning experiences, especially in the areas of writing narratively or creatively, or completing college entrance essays such as "personal statements." The statement: *The AVID teachers consistently engage me in real-world learning experiences* had responding participants 239 (50.10%) Completely Agreed, 200 (41.93%) Agreed, 36 (7.55%) Disagreed and two (0.42%) Completely Disagreed. Henceforth, 439 (90.03%) of these participants agreed that their AVID teachers provided consistent engagement in real world learning experiences (see Figure 14).
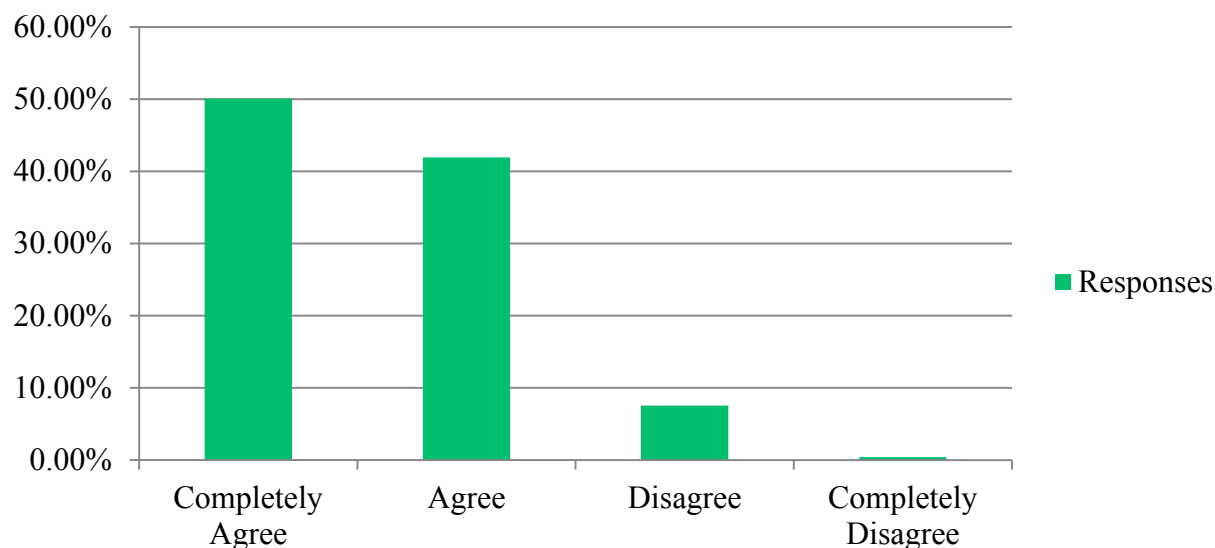
Figure 14. The AVID teachers consistently engage me in real-world learning experiences.

AVID students have a varying range of personalities. The AVID elective class

encourages all forms of inquiry and other practices whereby asking questions is critical to the

learning process. However, doing so could sometimes be a risk for AVID students, thus,

feelings of embarrassment often hamper a students' ability to inquire. However, teaching

students to take this kind of risk is sometimes difficult to overcome for many students. Gentle

persistence on the AVID teacher's behalf, coupled with structured practicing on behalf of the

student often leads to greater learned experiences by the student and lessen sense of risk.

Therefore, teaching students to ask for assistance is something that is continuously practiced

throughout a student's tenure in the AVID elective in preparation for college going cultures and

real-world experiences, such as job interviews and other forms of employment opportunities. In

the statement: *When asking AVID teachers for assistance, I can do it without fear of*

embarrassment, responding participants 249 (52.20%) Completely Agreed, 179 Agreed

(37.53%), 42 Disagreed (8.81%), and seven (1.47%) Completely Disagreed. Again, 428

(89.73%) of participants favorably agreed that they could ask for assistance from their AVID teachers without feeling embarrassed (see Figure 15).
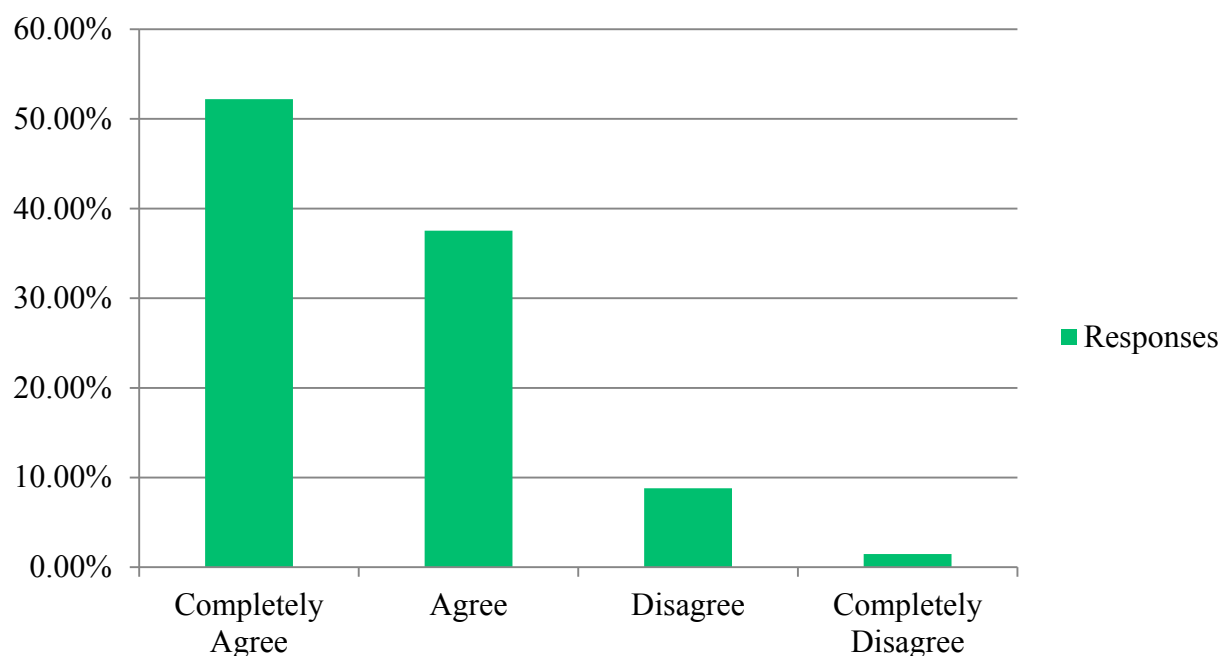
Figure 15. When asking AVID teachers for assistance, I can do it without fear of embarrassment.

Being an AVID teacher requires a variety of skills within their teaching canon, especially when holding students accountable for their academic behaviors. AVID teachers would not only inquire as to why their AVID students have not completed an assignment or task in a timely manner, they would also communicate with all their students' other teachers in the form of bi-weekly progress reports, and or check computerized grade books, and possibly communicate with parents regarding the student's academic digressions and declines. By monitoring students' early academic laziness, the AVID teacher promotes an atmosphere of accountability, not just for their AVID class, but for all classes. In the statement: *The AVID teachers call me out if I am being lazy with assignments* showed that responding participants, 182 (38.08%) Completely

Agree, 256 (53.56%) Agree, 36 (7.43%) Disagree and four (0.84%) Completely Disagree. There were 438 (91.64%) participants who agreed with this statement that they expect to be called out when they are being lazy with their assignments (see Figure 16).
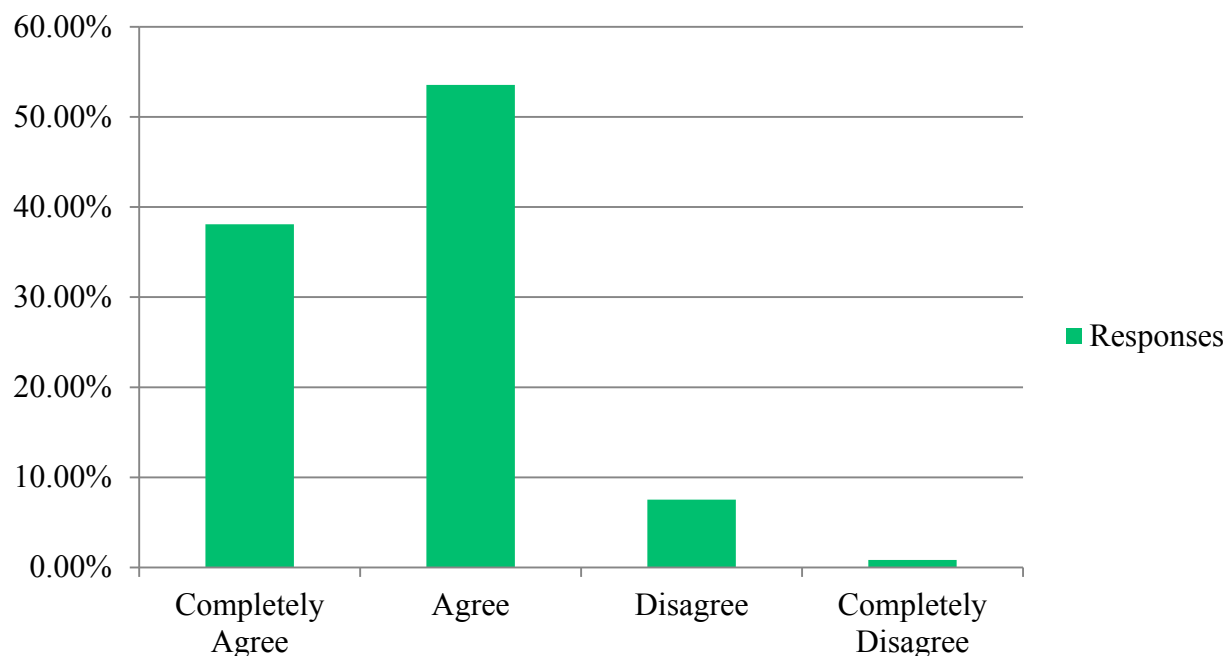
Figure 16. The AVID teachers call me out if I am being lazy with assignments.

AVID teachers provide many forms of support for academic needs, for example, tutoring (collaborative study groups), usually referred to as bi-weekly AVID tutorials, creating learning opportunities via networking, arranging for other AVID or non-AVID teacher assistance in more sophisticated subject matter outside the AVID teacher's specialized-credentialed subject, assisting the students in the selection of rigorous courses each year, monitoring academic progress as needed (usually bi-weekly), providing school supplies due to economic hardship, working closely with families to ensure the students' academic goals are being attained, and by providing daily encouragement to succeed despite whatever obstacles or challenges participants face. The statement: *The AVID teachers support me in my academic needs* revealed that

responding participants 263 (55.14%) Completely Agreed, 201 (42.14%) Agreed, 11 (2.31%)

Disagreed, and two (0.42%) Completely Disagreed. It is evident that of the 464 (97.28%)

participants who agreed, there is a high confidence among them that their AVID teacher supports

their academic needs (see Figure 17).
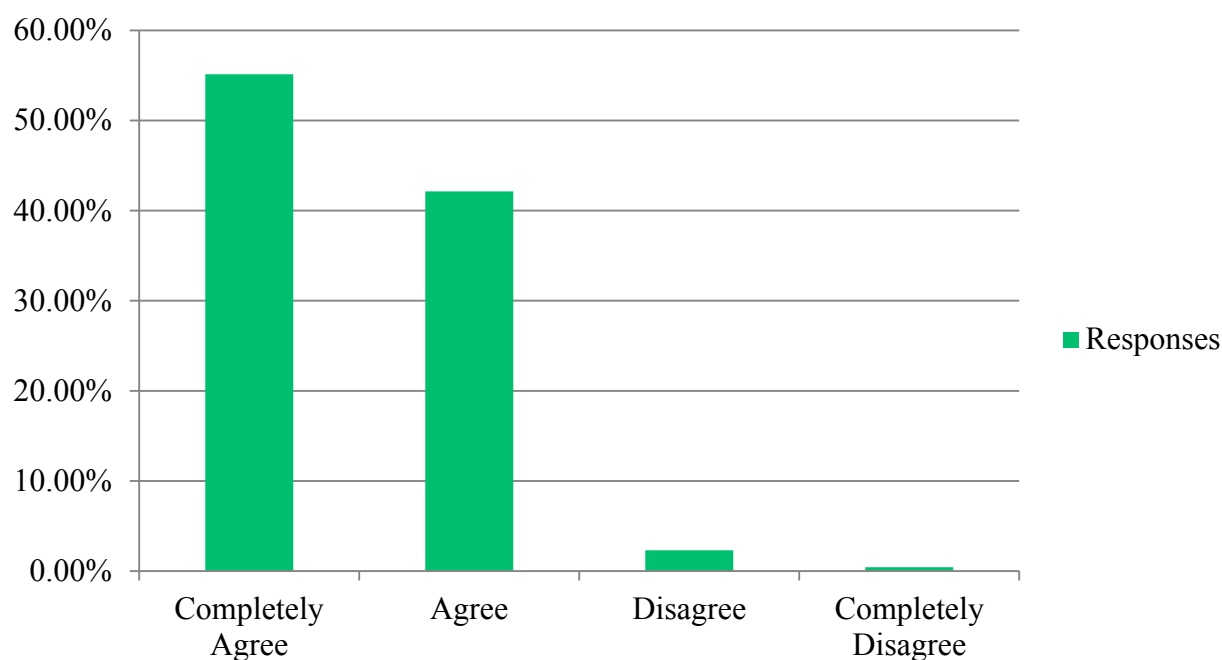
Figure 17. The AVID teachers support me in my academic needs.

Likert Survey Results: Social-Emotional

As Doll et al. (2014) had previously written the most essential ingredient in forging a

safe, supportive classroom environment will always be the quality and consistency of the

teacher's sensitive rapport with the students. Meanwhile, Bowlby and Ainsworth (2015) made

the claim that the ability for an individual to form an emotional and physical 'attachment' to

another person gives a sense of stability and security necessary to take risks, branch out, and

grow and develop as a personality. In the statement: *The AVID teacher makes me feel safe in*

their presence responding participants 278 (58.29%) Completely Agreed, 188 (39.41%) Agreed,

9 (1.89%) Disagreed and 2 (0.42%) Completely Disagreed. Therefore, 466 (97.96%) of

responding participants agreed that their AVID teachers made them feel safe in their presence (see Figure 18).
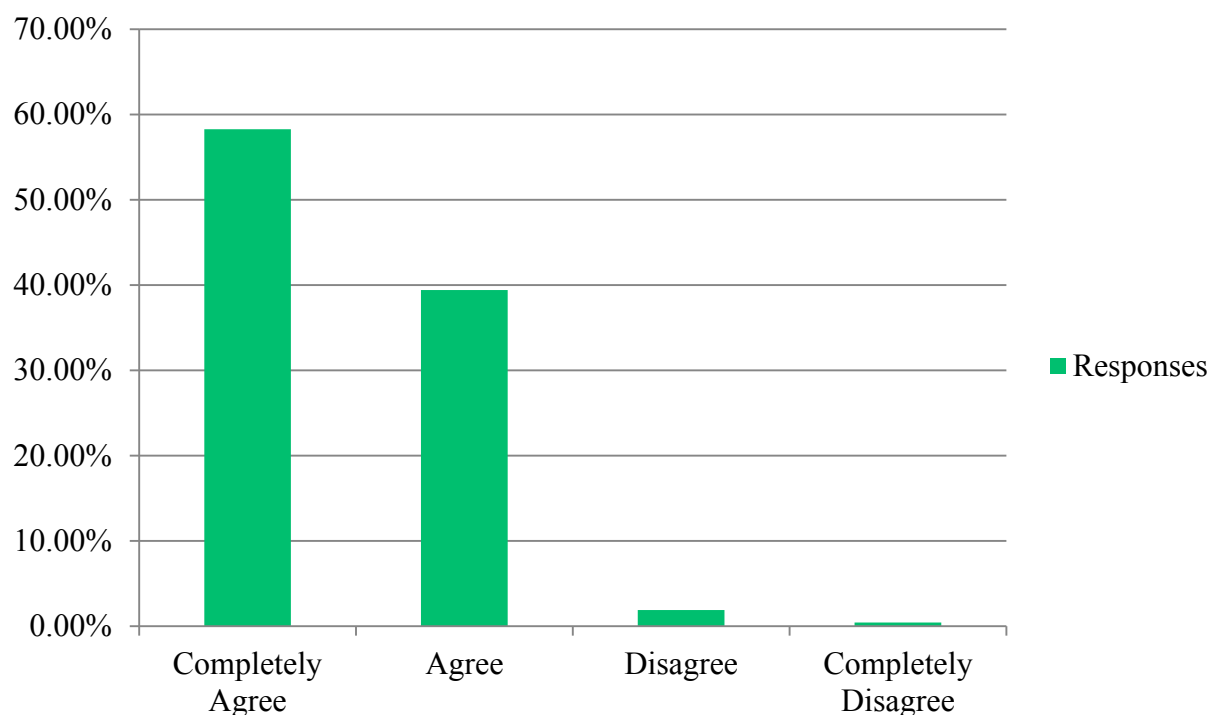
Figure 18. The AVID teacher makes me feel safe in their presence.

Jennings and Greenberg (2009) previously established that socially and emotionally competent teachers set the tone of the classroom by developing supportive and encouraging relationships with their students. In doing so, AVID students develop a sense of acceptance and value or worthiness. In the statement: *The AVID teachers provide a welcoming social environment* 281 (58.91%) Completely Agreed, 186 (38.99%) Agreed, eight (1.68%) Disagreed, and two (0.42%) Completely Disagreed. The importance of this statement is clear as 467 (97.9%) participants felt their AVID teachers provided a welcoming social environment (see Figure 19).
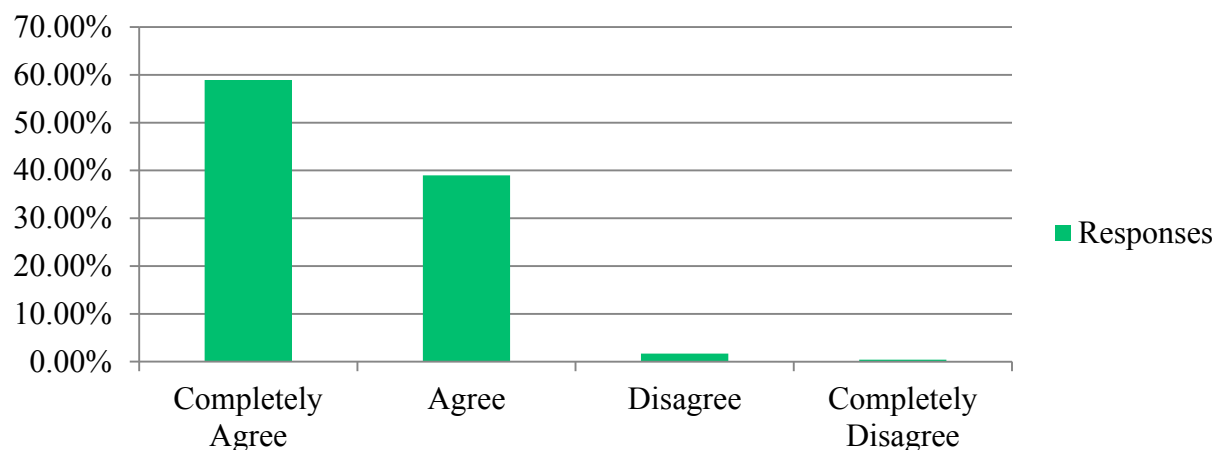
Figure 19. The AVID teachers provide a welcoming social environment.

Creating a network of peers and other outside sources could lead to greater social and emotional growth. AVID teachers create opportunities for students to network via with their peers and other outside sources through collaborative group work, college visitations, college and career guest speakers, and other opportunities such as writing college admission offices, and partaking in opportunities for internships (both career and academic). The ability for AVID students to network becomes of great importance as they prepare for college. AVID students quickly learn from former AVID students who graduated high school that their first year of college was positively impacted when they developed a networking system, thus helping them navigate their first year of college rigor and academics. The statement: *The AVID teacher addresses the importance of networking while in school* had responding participants 232 (48.74%) Completely Agree, 221 (46.43%) Agree, 22 (4.62%) Disagree, and one (0.21%) Completely Disagree. Participants 467 (97.9%) clearly see the importance of networking for their current future success (see Figure 20).
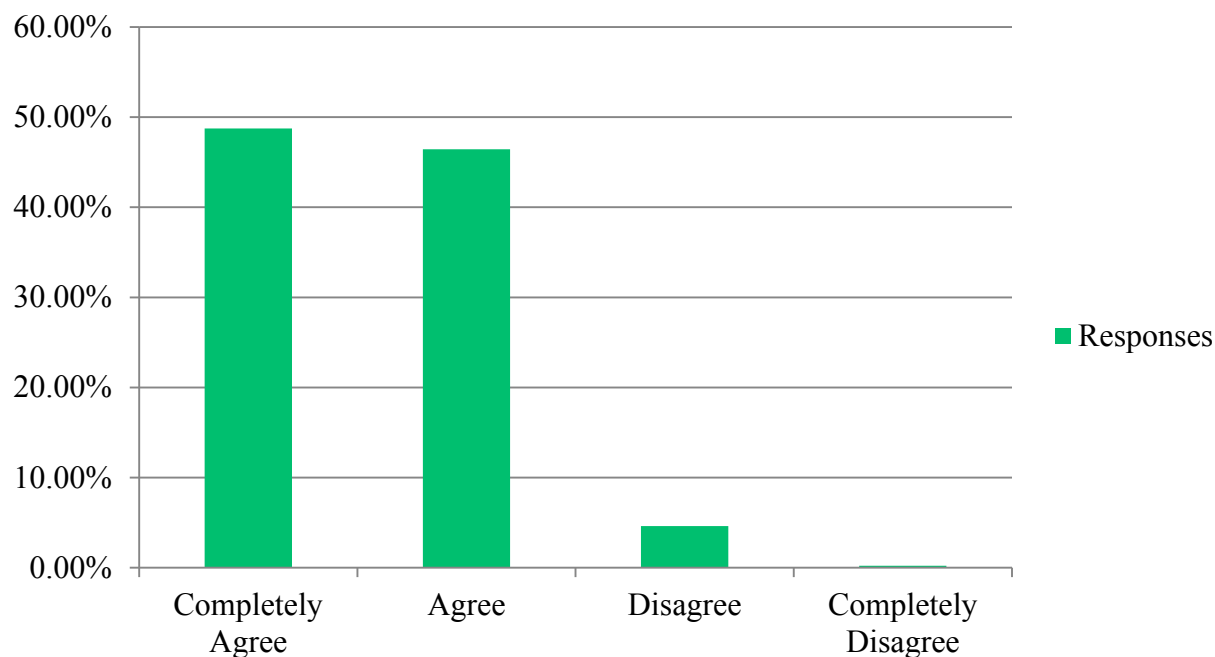
Figure 20. The AVID teacher addresses the importance of networking while in school.

Kafele (2014) earlier explained that it is essential that teaching and learning are both culturally relevant and responsive to the learner. Kafele (2014) went on to explain that students must be able to see how their learning that occurs during the day has relevance to their lives. The significance of cultural learning for social and emotional impact was asked in the statement: *The AVID teachers sometimes use various cultural activities in the lessons.* Responding participants 156 (32.91%) Completely Agreed, 241 (50.84%) Agreed, 73 (15.4%) Disagreed, and four (0.84%) Completely Disagreed. While it is evident that 397 (83.75%) of the participants agreed their AVID teachers infused cultural activities in their lessons, there tended to be a drop-off of the number of participants who completely agreed (see Figure 21).
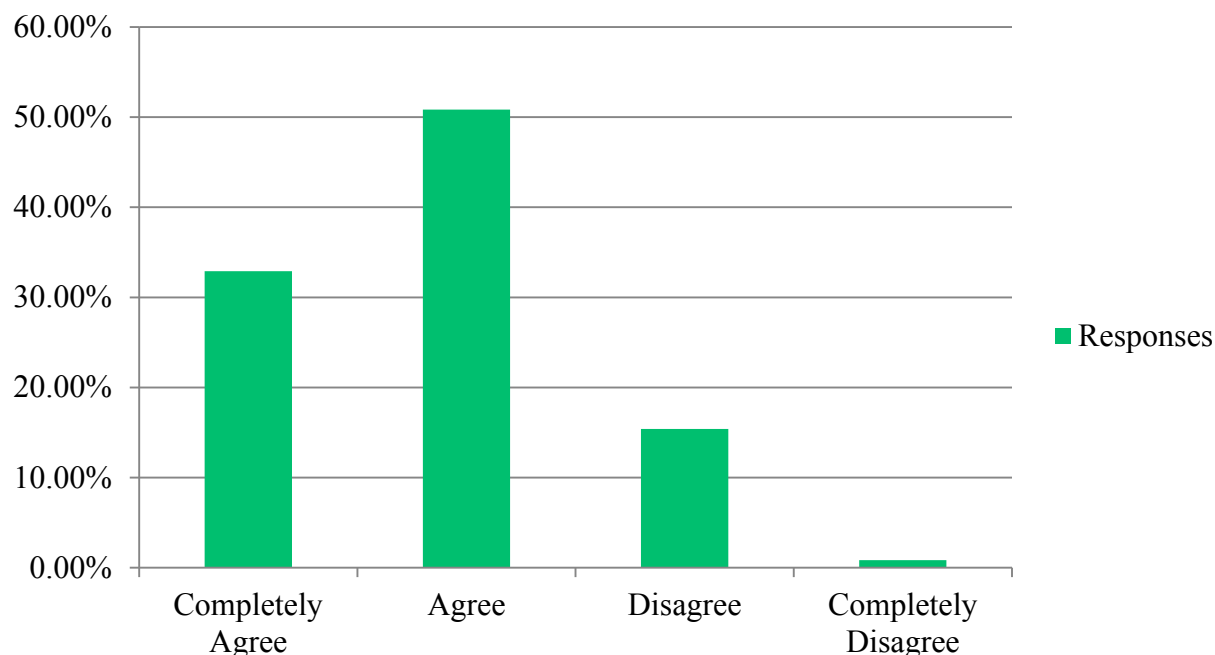
Figure 21. The AVID teacher sometimes uses various cultural activities in the lesson.

When AVID teachers define, then promote networking to typically ninth grade students for the first time, most freshman cannot appreciate the significance, impact and importance of this critical skill. Therefore, the AVID teacher's responsibility is to bridge a series of examples through AVID curricular activities that promote the social skill of networking. For example, AVID teachers would often use ice-breakers at the start of a new school year to promote social bonding. When these various ice-breaker activities are used properly, coupled with strategic collaborative activities, students begin to recognize the value of networking within their peer groups and eventually, their class(es). The statement: *The AVID teacher explains why being social can support opportunities for networking with new classmates* had responding participants 227 (47.89%) Completely Agreed, 219 (46.20%) Agreed, 27 (5.7%) Disagreed, and one (0.21%) Completely Disagreed. Plainly, 446 (94.09%) of participants agreed that the AVID teachers explain why being social could support opportunities for networking with new classmates (see Figure 22).
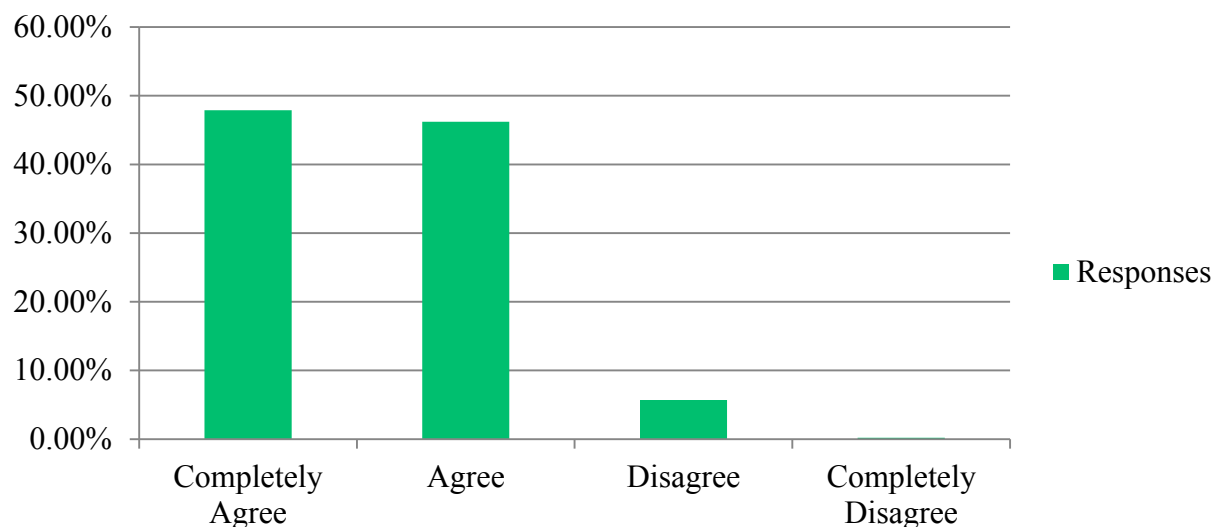
Figure 22. The AVID teacher explains why being social can support opportunities for networking with new classmates.

AVID teachers deliver daily appropriate advice in many forms for their AVID students. Such advice is coupled with an emotional support component that empowers the AVID student to critically weigh that advice based on their AVID teacher's perceptions, opinions and beliefs that would vary for every AVID student. For example, an AVID student would seek advice as to what classes to take each year, or whether to challenge a rigorous AP course. Or perhaps, deciding to participate in multiple extracurricular activities, or choosing a college major versus career pathway. These advisable moments could have profound impacts on a direction an AVID student chooses as they move their academic and or career path forward. Therefore, in the statement: *The AVID teachers support me emotionally with appropriate advice*, responding participants 217 (45.88%) Completely Agreed, 206 (43.55%) Agreed, 47 (9.94%) Disagreed, and three (0.63%) Completely Disagreed. Overall, 423 (89.43%) of participants agreed that their AVID teachers supported them emotionally with appropriate advice (see Figure 23).
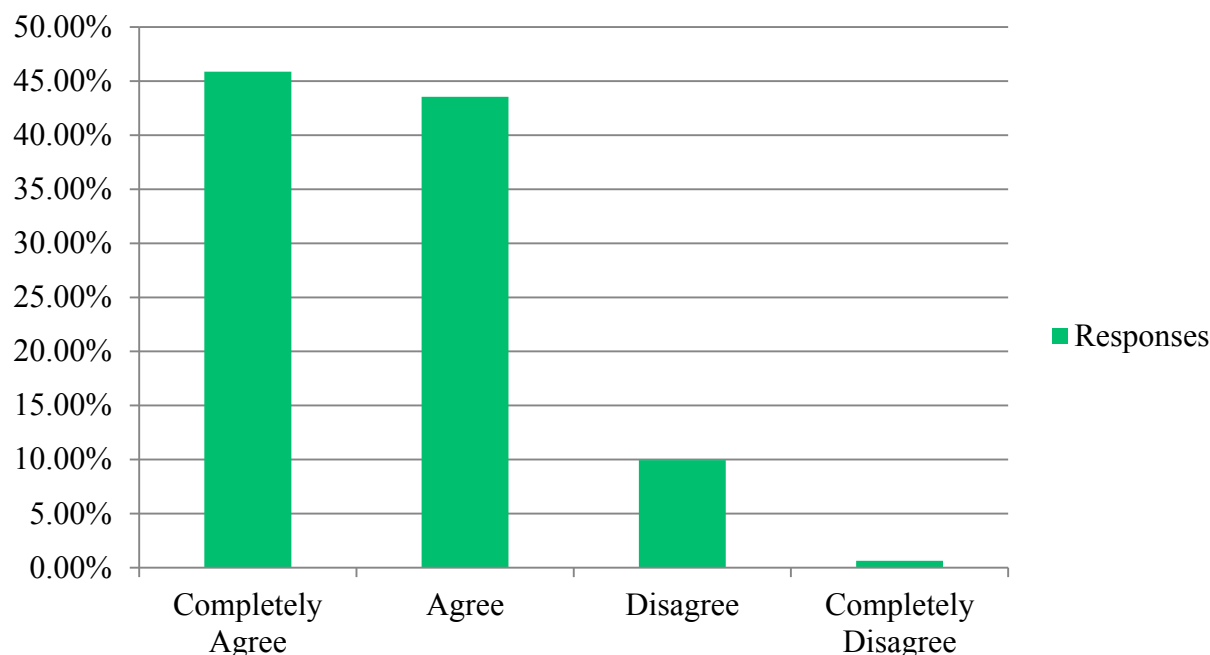
Figure 23. The AVID teachers support me emotionally with appropriate advice.

AVID teachers routinely recognize their students emotionally through positive

recognition programs such as Student-of-the-Month, announcements of college acceptance

letters or admission to a college. Other small, yet important recognizable moments may occur

when a student receives recognition for making the Honor-Roll or competing successfully on a

winning sport or academic team. Such opportunities for recognition at any comprehensive high

school could often get lost in the sheer number of awards that occur at any school. When an

AVID teacher openly recognizes their students in front of their peers for successful

accomplishments, an emotional attachment of pride is heightened. In the statement:

The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with positive recognition, responding participants

230 (48.52%) Completely Agreed, 215 (43.36%) Agreed, 29 (6.12%) Disagreed and zero (0%)

participants Completely Disagreed (see Figure 24).
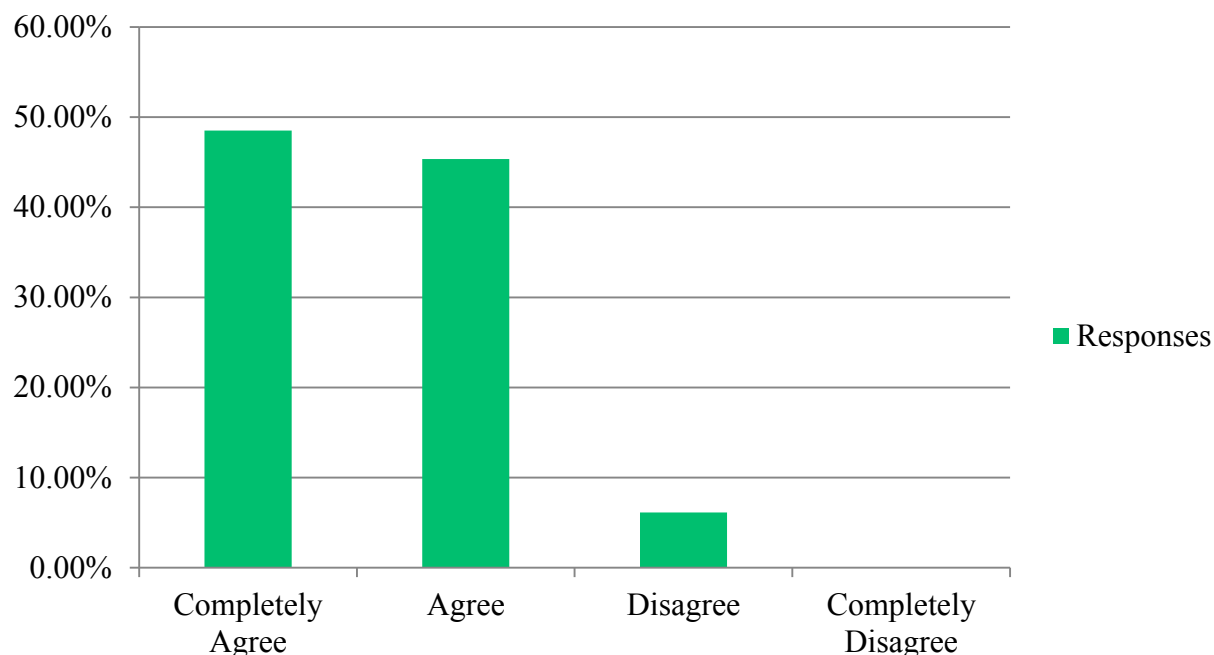
Figure 24. The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with positive recognition.

Pugh and Tschannes-Moran (2016) earlier indicated that students feel valued by teachers that connect with them daily. This connection promoted among other things social-emotional wellbeing. Many of the authors of this research confirm the importance of building an emotional connection. For example, Connolly (1995) previously pointed out that the teacher-student connection as being even more critical for those students who enter [the] classroom with unmet needs and a variety of behaviors that interfere with their social-emotional development and academic achievement. Further, Blum (2005) contended, "School connection is the belief by students that adults in the school care about them as individuals. Students are more likely to succeed when they feel connected to school." (p. 1). In the statement: *The AVID teachers connect emotionally with me*, 173 (36.58%) Completely Agreed, 206 (43.55%) Agreed, 81 (17.12%) Disagreed, and 13 (2.76%) Completely Disagreed. Most participants 379 (80.13%) agreed that the AVID teachers connect emotionally with the (see Figure 25).
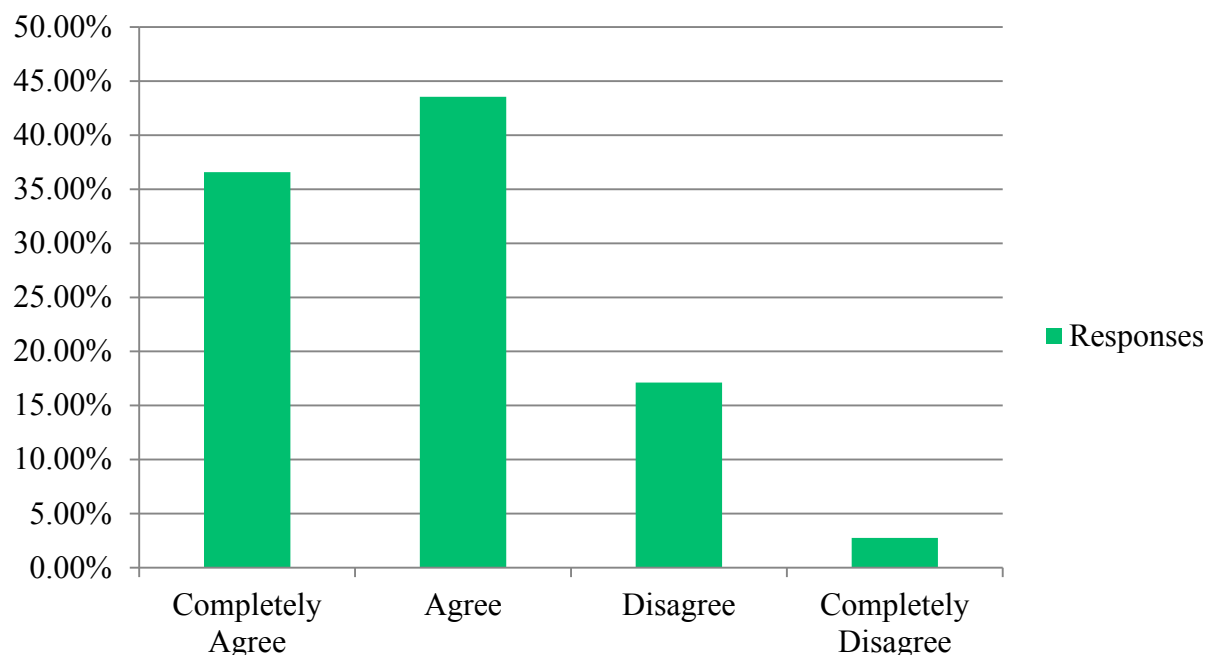
Figure 25. The AVID teachers connect emotionally with me.

Among their other duties, AVID teachers have the unique position of making their AVID students feel emotionally safe. This is not to say that other non-AVID teachers do not behave this way. However, AVID teachers have the responsibility to develop a bond because the high school AVID teacher may have the same students (or class) for more than one year, and as is often the case, up to four years—looping. The relationship that is formed between the AVID teacher and the AVID students are deeply connected to the belief that the AVID teacher is a safe person to share emotional concerns for the AVID student. Blum (2005) explained, "Critical requirements for feeling connected include high academic rigor and expectations coupled with support for learning, positive adult-student relationships, and physical and emotional safety." (p. 1)

Therefore, in the statement: *I feel emotionally safe in my AVID teacher's class,* responding participants 239 (50.32%) Completely Agreed, 208 (43.79%) Agreed, 22 (4.63%)

Disagreed, and six (1.26%) Completely Disagreed. It is evident that most students 447 (94.11%) agreed that they feel emotionally safe in their AVID teacher's class (see Figure 26).
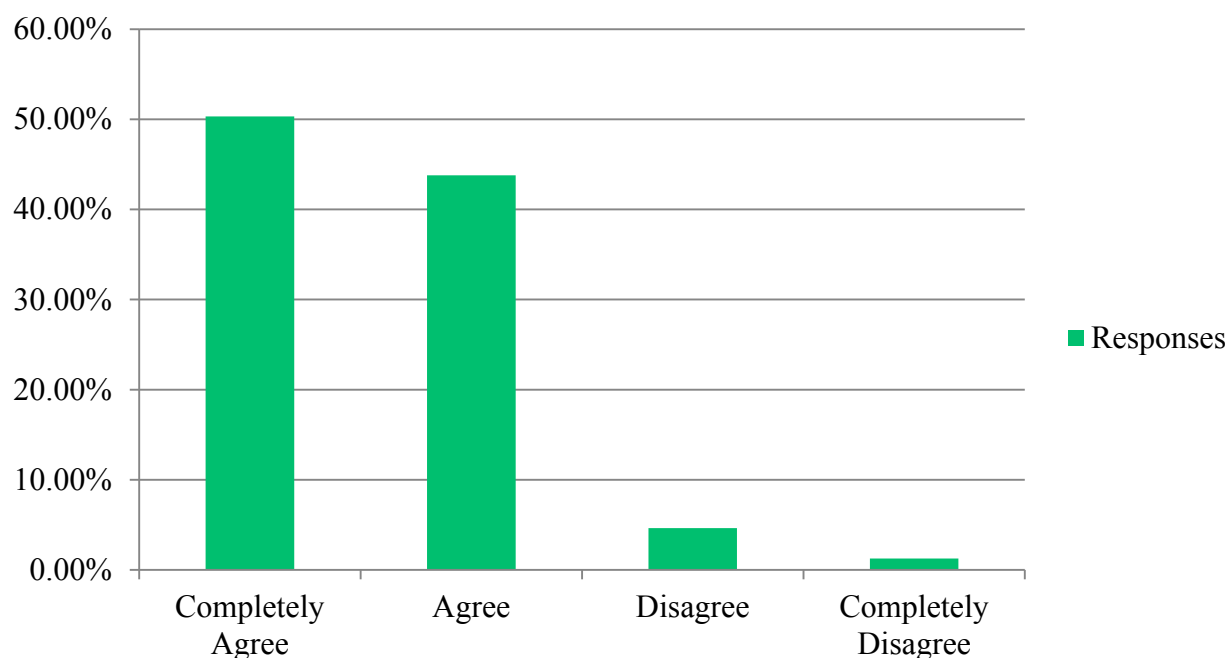
Figure 26. I feel emotionally safe in my AVID teacher's class.

Earlier, Cornelius-White (2007) wrote that their research suggested when teachers' have positive relationships with students, whereby showing characteristics as empathy and warmth, ultimately this lead to higher engagement, fewer resistant behaviors, and improved achievement. Also, previously Cooper and Miness (2014) stated that students who have a positive student-teacher relationship with a teacher tend to develop higher levels of belonging in that teacher's class and in school more broadly as compared with students who do not experience such positive relationships. When posed with the statement: *I am emotionally positive on a regular basis when I come to the AVID class,* responding participants 231(48.63%) Completely Agreed, 202 (42.53%) Agreed, 35 (7.37%) Disagreed, and seven (1.47%) Completely Disagreed. Ultimately, 433 participants (91.16%) of participants agreed that they felt emotionally positive on a regular basis when attending their AVID class (see Figure 27).
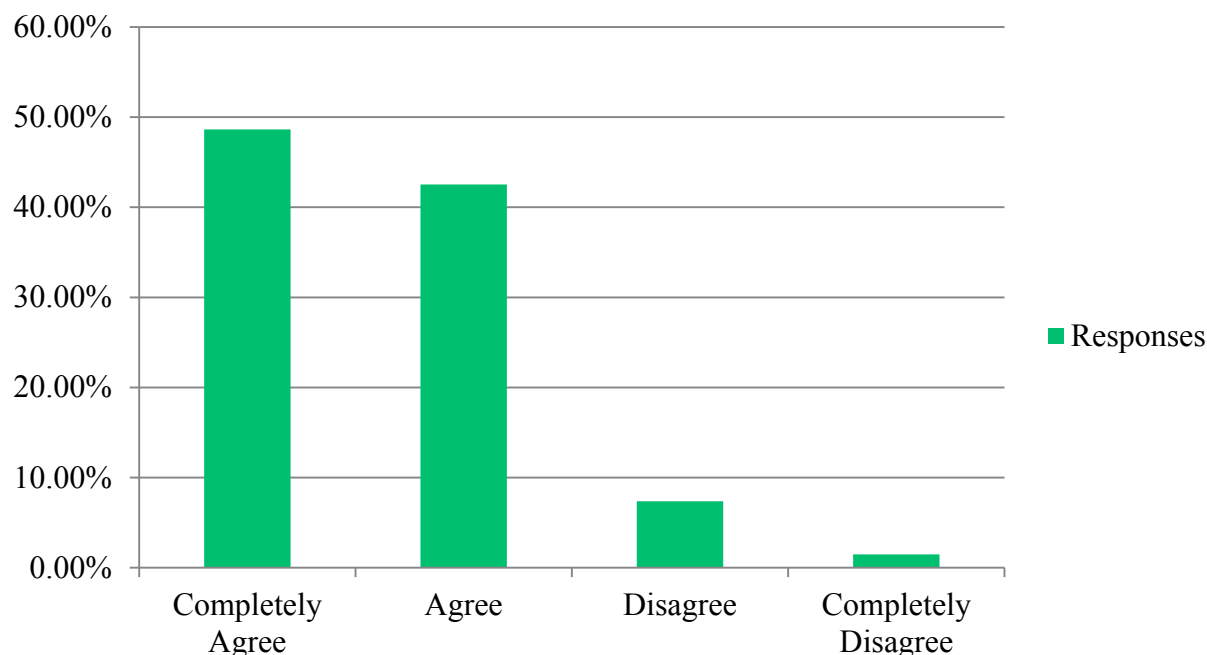
Figure 27. I am emotionally positive on a regular basis when I come to my AVID class.

Likert Survey Results: Daily Attendance

Anderson, et al. (2004) and other authors have insisted that when the teacher-student relationship evolves, students have a greater willingness to attend school daily and with a sense of urgency (Anderson et al., 2004; Balfanz, Herzog & Mac Iver, 2007; Blum, 2005; Guthrie & Guthrie, 2002; Klem & Connell, 2004; and Lamdin, 1996). Further, as previously mentioned, little research has been conducted on the importance of the teacher-student relationship as it relates directly to students attending school daily—and even less research could be found on specifically involving that link with AVID students. When asked: *The AVID teacher motivates me to come to school daily,* responding participants 233 (49.05%) Completely Agreed, 199 (41.89%) Agreed, 39 (8.21%) Disagreed, and four (0.84%) Completely Disagreed. Collectively, 432 (90.94%) of responding participants agreed that the AVID teacher motivates them to attend school daily (see Figure 28).
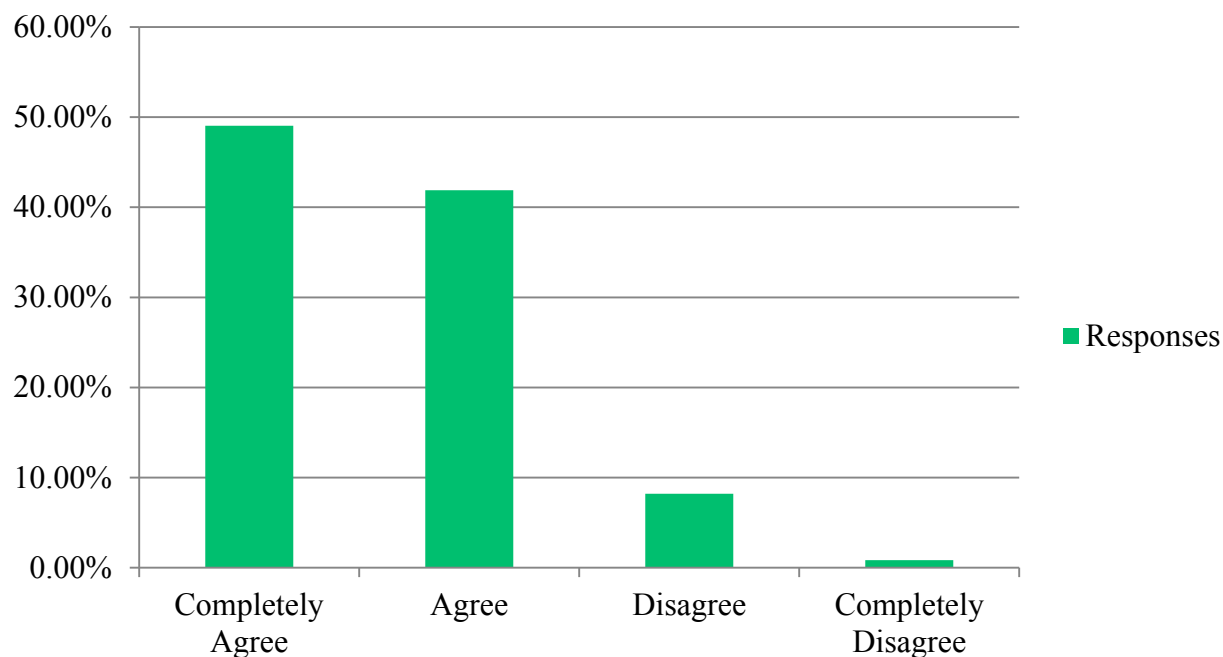
Figure 28. The AVID teacher motivates me to come to school daily.

Blum (2005) earlier stated that having students feel connected to their schools promote certain qualities and he explained that, "Increasing the number of students connected to school [will] improve critical accountability measures. Strong scientific evidence demonstrates that increased student connection to school decreases absenteeism . . . promoting educational motivation, classroom engagement, academic performance, school attendance, and completion rates." (p. 3). Blum's (2005) report also outlined seven qualities that seem to influence students' positive attachment to school, and having concern for this section, having a sense of belonging and being part of a school. When asked: *The AVID teacher explains the overall importance of attending school daily,* responding participants 244 (51.37%) Completely Agreed, 205 (43.16%) Agreed, 24 (5.05%) Disagreed, and two (0.42%) Completely Disagreed. The clear majority 449 (94.53%) of participants agreed that their AVID teacher explained the overall importance of attending school daily (see Figure 29).
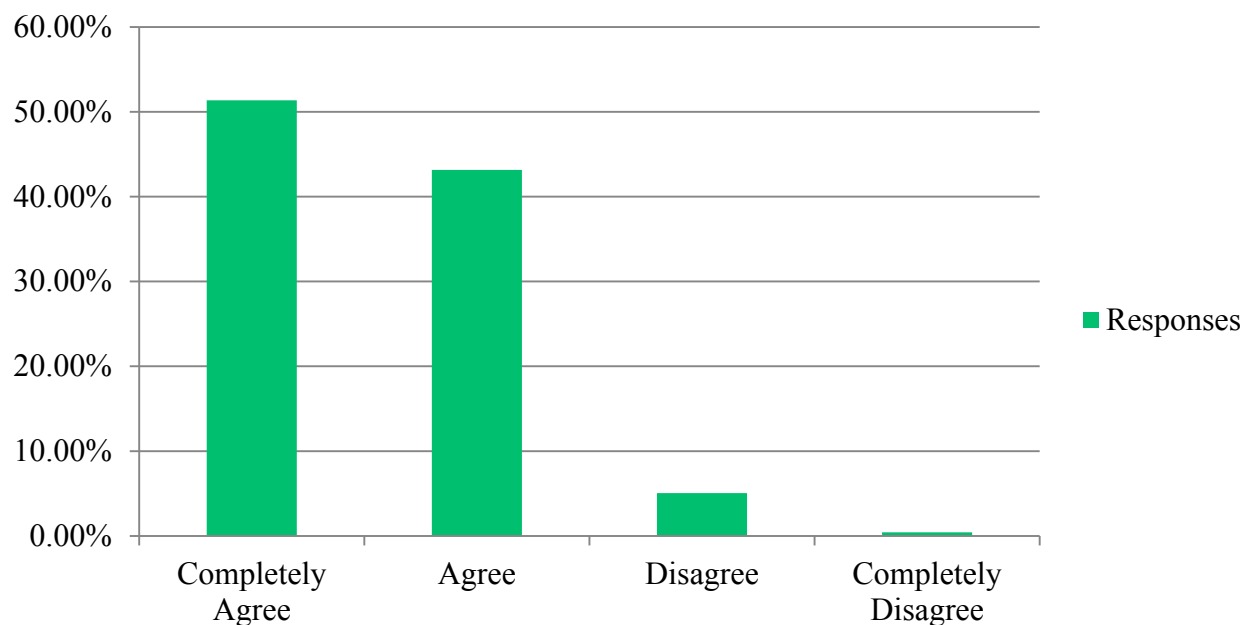
Figure 29. The AVID teacher explains the overall importance of attending school daily.

AVID teachers tend to have a higher expectation for their AVID students. They tend to hold AVID students to a higher accountability due to their being at-risk status. Stipek (2006) previously explained that nurturing students via high expectations is the cure. She stated that being a caring and supportive teacher does not mean coddling; rather, it means holding students accountable while providing the support they need to succeed. So, when posed with the statement: *The AVID teacher will call home when I'm not in school for an extended length of time*, responding participants 118 (24.89%) Completely Agreed, 192 (40.51%) Agreed, 138 (29.11%) Disagreed, and 26 (5.49%) Completely Disagreed (see Figure 30). While the majority 310 (65.40%) agreed in one way or another, 126 (34.6%) Disagreed. Obviously, AVID teachers calling home more frequently when participants miss school is not as high of an occurring norm as one would think. However, as discovered later, AVID participants' attendance rates in this district were comparatively much higher than their non-AVID peers, thus possibly explaining why the high rate of students feeling their AVID teachers do not call home when missing school

was a response by participants. Therefore, and theoretically, why would these AVID participants feel that calling home was a factor their AVID teacher embraced? The participants were already attending school daily at a high rate (see Figure 30).
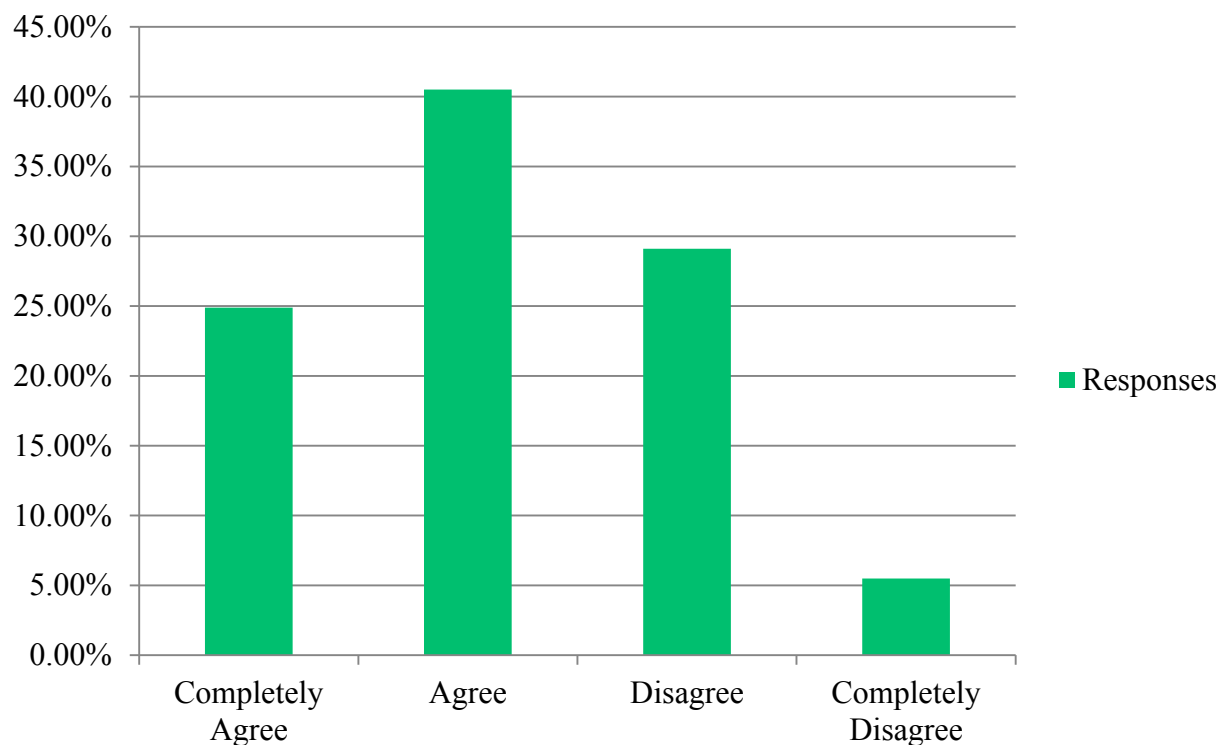
Figure 30. The AVID teacher would call home when I'm not in school for an extended length of time.

Active and experienced AVID students have a sense of self-accountability. For example, if an AVID student is floundering in an academic course, they almost would always seek out their AVID teacher for academic support. Likewise, when asked: *When compared to other teachers, I will always let my AVID teacher know when I have a planned absence,* responding participants 164 (34.45%) Completely Agreed, 179 (37.61%), 119 (25.00%) Disagreed, and 14 (2.94%) Completely Disagreed. While 343 (72.06%) of participants agreed that they would always let their AVID teachers know of a planned absence, 133 (27.94%) would not (see Figure 31).
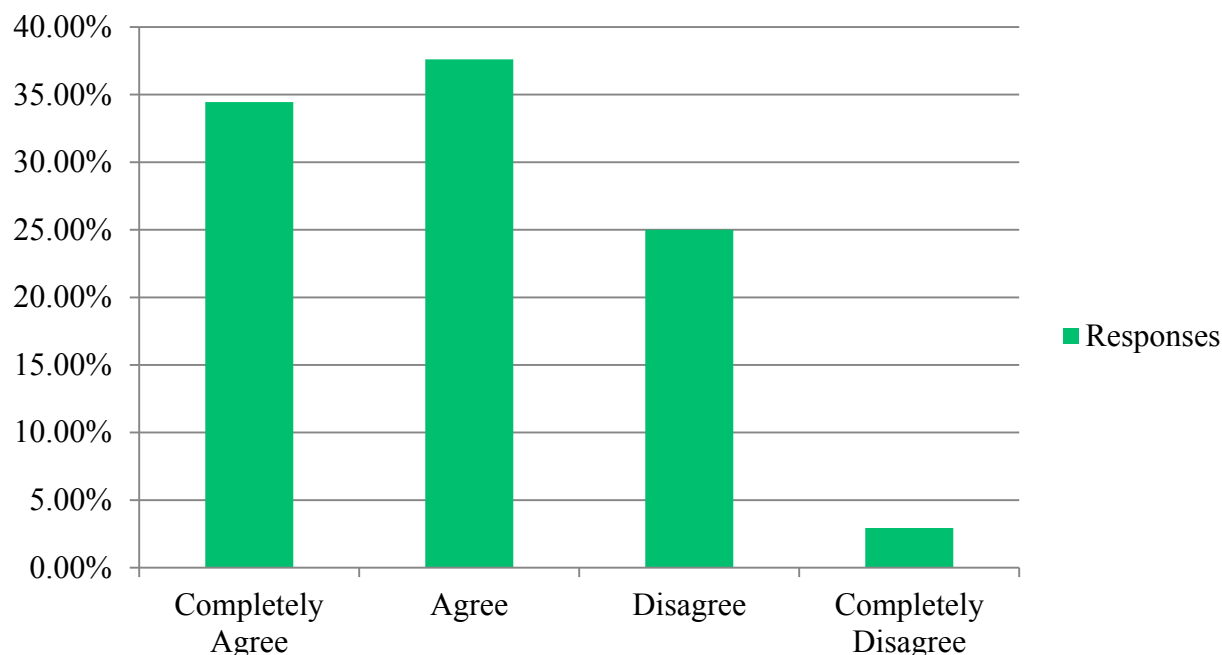
Figure 31. When compared to other teachers, I will always let my AVID teacher know when I have a planned absence.

The impact and influence of any teacher could be deep-seated. However, when an AVID teacher develops a positive teacher-student relationship, one that may last up to four-years, this connection could have a lifelong profound effect in molding young students' lives. As earlier mentioned, Peterson et al. (2011), explained students from all schools recognized their teachers were important for 'giving us knowledge' and 'giving us as much information as they can.' However, students were most focused on how student-teacher relationships impacted their motivation and ultimately their success. With this line of thinking, students were prompted with: *As a result of my AVID teachers' influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly.* Participants 226 (47.38%) Completely Agreed, 213 (44.65%) Agreed, 33 (6.92%) Disagreed, and five (1.05%) Completely Disagreed. There were 439 (92.03%) participants who agreed that due to their AVID teachers' influence, that they have come to understand the importance of attending school daily (see Figure 32).
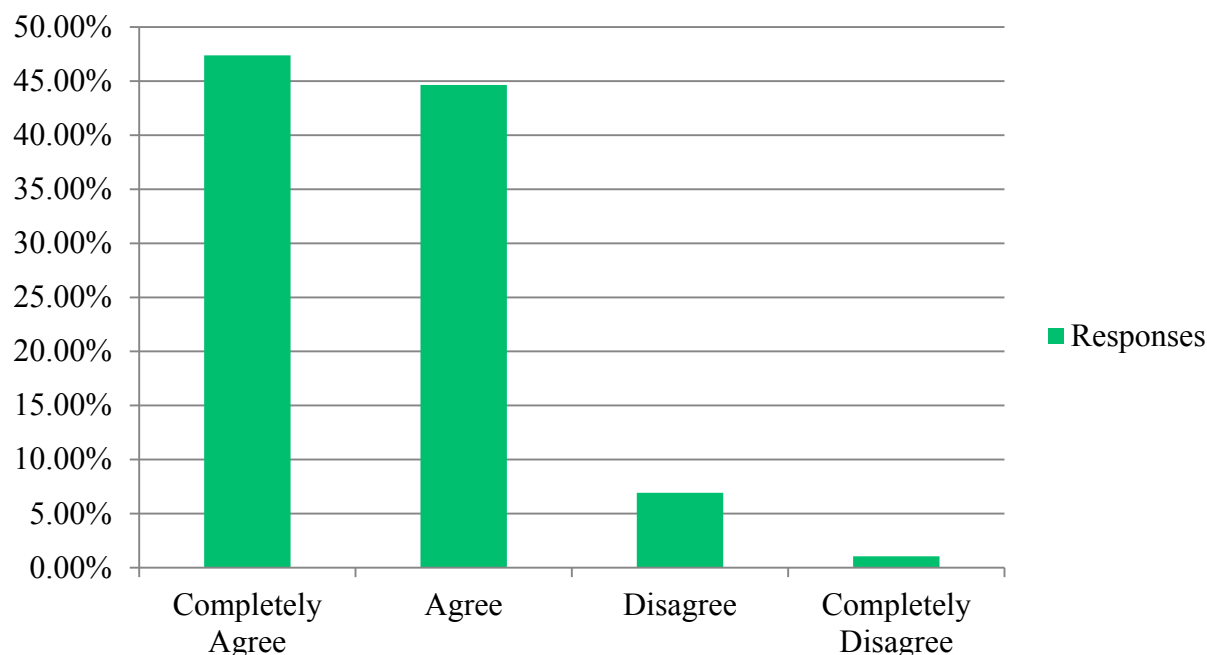
Figure 32. As a result of my AVID teachers' influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly.

Academic Impact

AVID's influence on a student's ability to learn is impactful and persistent as already touted by AVID data presented earlier (The AVID Effect / The AVID Effect, n.d.). The participants examined within this study were from five of seven high school within this district. The researcher examined the Grade Point Averages (GPAs) for five consecutive semesters from Fall 2015 through Winter 2018. The data revealed a significant gap of higher GPAs representing AVID participants in grades 11 and 12 from the five-high schools versus that of non-AVID 11th and 12th grade participants for the same five high schools.

In the academic year 2015-2016, the selected high schools 11th grade AVID participants outperformed the same selected high school's non-AVID 11th grade students in overall GPA. The 11th grade AVID participants' average GPA was a 3.19 while the 11th grade non-AVID students averaged in at 2.75. Meanwhile, during the same timeframe, 12th grade AVID

participants from the selected high schools had a collective GPA of 3.38, while their counterpart non-AVID students averaged in at 2.76. In all, 525 11th and 12th grade AVID participants had a collective GPA of 3.26, while the 4853 of the same selected high school's non-AVID students' average GPA was at 2.76 (see Figure 33).

In the academic year 2016-2017, the five selected high school's 11th grade AVID participants outperformed their counterpart non-AVID 11th grade students in overall GPA. The 11th grade AVID participants' average GPA was again 3.19 while the non-AVID 11th grade students averaged in at 2.73, slightly lower than the previous year. Meanwhile, during the same timeframe, 12th grade AVID participants from the five selected high schools had a collective GPA of 3.30, a slight dip compared to the previous year. Their counterpart non-AVID students averaged in at 2.83, an increase of .07%. In all, 558 11th and 12th grade AVID participants from the selected high schools had a collective GPA of 3.24, while the 5014 from the same selected high schools of non-AVID students' average GPA was at 2.78 (see Figure 33).

In the academic year, 2017-2018, only semester one was calculated at the time of this research. However, the data continues to reveal similar patterns to the previous four-semesters. The observed school's 11th grade AVID participants outperformed their counterpart non-AVID 11th grade students in overall GPA. The 11th grade AVID participants' average GPA was again 3.08 while the non-AVID 11th grade students averaged in at 2.60, both GPAs slightly lower than the previous semester. Meanwhile, during the same timeframe, 12th grade AVID participants had a collective GPA of 3.27, a slight dip again compared to the previous year. Their counterpart non-AVID students averaged in at 2.75, falling by .08%. In all, 597 11th and 12th grade AVID participants from the five selected high schools had a collective GPA of 3.17 for the

first semester of 2018, while the 4327 non-AVID 11th and 12th grade students' average GPA was at 2.68 for their first semester comparisons (see Figure 33).

Comparatively, a five-semester look revealed the following: 11th grade AVID participants from the five high schools had a 3.15 GPA and their non-AVID 11th grade peers recorded a 2.69 GPA. A difference of 0.46%. The 12th grade AVID participants from the same high schools recorded a 3.31 GPA and non-AVID 12th grade peers had a 2.78 GPA. A difference of 0.53%. The combined 11th and 12th grade AVID participants' GPA was 3.23, while the combined 11th and 12th grade non-AVID peer's GPA was 2.74. A difference of 0.49%. The total average of AVID participants examined over these five-semesters were 560, and the average of non-AVID students examined over the same five-semesters were 4731 (see Figure 33).

Five-Semester AVID and Non-AVID GPA Comparisons (2015-2018)				
	Grade 11	Grade 12	Combined GPAs	Total Students
AVID GPA 2015-2016	3.19	3.38	3.26	525
NON-AVID GPA 2015-2016	2.75	2.76	2.76	4853
AVID GPA 2016-2017	3.19	3.3	3.24	558
NON-AVID GPA 2016-2017	2.73	2.83	2.78	5014
AVID GPA 2017-2018*	3.08	3.27	3.17	597
NON-AVID GPA 2017-2018*	2.6	2.75	2.68	4237
5 Semester Average AVID Students	3.15	3.31	3.23	560
5 Semester Average NON-AVID Students	2.69	2.78	2.74	4731

*Represents only one (first) semester of calculated GPAs-2017-2018.

Figure 33: Five-semester AVID and Non-AVID GPA comparisons (2015-2018).

Attendance Impact

AVID teachers tend to focus a bit more on their AVID students' attendance since many

AVID students were considered at-risk students. Gallagher (n.d.) found "Positive teacher-

student relationships can impact students' social and academic outcomes, and thus reduce drop-

out rates" (p.3). A five-semester look within the participants' school district of 11th and 12th

grade AVID participants and 11th and 12th grade non-AVID students examined the following

categories for consideration: Number of days enrolled each semester/year, number of days

present each semester/year, number of days' average absence for each semester/year and the total

of students impacted for both groups.

In the 2015-2016 academic year, grade 11 AVID participants averaged 178 days enrolled,

173 days present, and 4 days of absence. There were 265 11th grade AVID participants enrolled

during this period. The 12th grade AVID participants averaged 178 days enrolled, 174 days

present, and 4 days of absence. There were 260 12th grade AVID participants enrolled during

this period (see Figure 34). Comparatively, in the 2015-2016 academic year, grade 11 non-

AVID students averaged 174 days enrolled, 169 days present, and 3 days of absence. There

were 2410 11th grade non-AVID students enrolled in 2015-2016. Meanwhile, 12th grade non-

AVID students during this time-period averaged 174 days enrolled, 168 days present, and 6 days

of absence. There were 2443 12th grade non-AVID students enrolled (see Figure 34).

In the 2016-2017 academic year, grade 11 AVID participants averaged 179 days enrolled,

176 days present, and 3 days of absence. There were 334 11th grade AVID participants enrolled

during this period. (see Figure 34). The 12th grade AVID participants averaged 177 days

enrolled, 171 days present, and 5 days of absence. There were 263 12th grade AVID participants

enrolled during this period (see Figure 34). Similarly, in the 2016-2017 academic year, grade 11

non-AVID students averaged 176 days enrolled, 170 days present, and 3 days of absence. There were 2564 11th grade non-AVID students enrolled in 2015-2016. The 12th grade non-AVID students during this time-period averaged 176 days enrolled, 169 days present, and 6 days of absence. There were 2450 12th grade non-AVID students enrolled (see Figure 34).

The 2017-2018 academic year included only first semester data.   Therefore, grade 11 AVID participants averaged 88 days enrolled, 86 days present, and 2 days of absence. There were 265 11th grade AVID participants enrolled during this semester. The 12th grade AVID participants averaged 88 days enrolled, 86 days present, and 2 days of absence. There were 273 12th grade AVID participants enrolled during this semester (see Figure 34). Lastly, in the 2017-2018 semester-one academic year for grade 11 non-AVID students averaged 86 days enrolled, 85 days present, and 2 days of absence. There were 2171 11th grade non-AVID students enrolled in 2017-2018. The 12th grade non-AVID students during this time-period averaged 88 days enrolled, 85 days present, and 2 days of absence. There were 2159 12th grade non-AVID students enrolled during this semester (see Figure 34).

Five-Semester Attendance AVID and Non-AVID Students (2015-2018)			
ATTENDANCE AVID DISTRICTWIDE 2015-2016			
	Days Enrolled	**Days Present**	**Absences**	**Total Students**
GRADE 11	178	173	4	265
GRADE 12	178	174	4	260
ATTENDANCE NON-AVID DISTRICTWIDE 2015-2016			
GRADE 11	174	169	3	2410
GRADE 12	174	168	6	2443
ATTENDANCE AVID DISTRICTWIDE 2016-2017			
GRADE 11	179	176	3	334
GRADE 12	177	171	5	263
ATTENDANCE NON-AVID DISTRICTWIDE 2016-2017			
GRADE 11	176	170	3	2564
GRADE 12	176	169	6	2450
ATTENDANCE AVID DISTRICTWIDE 2017-2018*			
***GRADE 11**	88	86	2	265
***GRADE 12**	88	86	2	273
ATTENDANCE NON-AVID DISTRICTWIDE 2017-2018*			
***GRADE 11**	87	85	2	2171
***GRADE 12**	88	85	2	2159

*Represents only (first) semester of attendance.

Figure 34: Five-semester attendance AVID and non-AVID students (2015-2018)

It should be noted that "districtwide" in this data analysis refers only to the five-high schools examined. Furthermore, since only grades 11 and 12 were examined, the variance in the attendance data is not necessarily reflective of any one student or class being in the AVID program for more than two years if you consider, for example, that an 11th grade AVID or non-AVID student in 2015 would not be part of the overall data when the academic year 2017-2018 came around due to graduating or leaving the school/district. While considering this factor as being non-relevant to the discussion, it was still noteworthy to inform the reader that this data is being impacted by yearly data. Additionally, there is no accounting for students who either came into or exited the school district in those grades levels at any point during those five-semesters.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Focus groups

Upon meeting with the researcher, participants provided the researcher with a unique four-digit number that represented who they were, thus to keep confidentiality. This unique four-digit number was also listed on the previous Likert survey, thus to allow for accurate triangulation of data by the researcher. Each participant's school was also confidentially identified as follows: HS1, HS2, HS3, HS4 and HS5.

Participants were provided with a preview of the six statements they would be speaking about prior to the start of the discussion. The first five-statements were selected directly from the Likert survey (see Figures 1 – 25) — two statements from the *academic* sections; two statements from the *social-emotional* section; and one statement from the *attendance* section. One statement, number six, was not on the Likert survey, and was designed to ask participants what their overall AVID experience was as it related towards their AVID teacher-student relationship. Here were those six statements:

1.   The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in my classes.

2.   The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs.

3.   The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.

4.   The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me.

5.   As a result of my AVID teachers' influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly.

6.   Please explain your overall AVID experience as it relates towards the teacher-student relationship.

Another question posed to the focus groups and not included in this data was whether the participants thought there was more value in having one AVID teacher for four-years of high school, or different AVID teachers each of the four years. These findings would be discussed in Chapter 5.

Focus group transcripts

At times, students need motivation to jump-start a "stick-with-it" attitude when it comes to performing in school. Generally, AVID teachers and alike understand this concept and take actions to inspire students to work hard at excelling in school. Gehlbach et al. (2012) found substantial evidence that the positive aspects of teacher-student relationships are associated with achievement and motivational outcomes.

Table 1 participants discusses the AVID teacher's ability to motivate the participant in class to give their best efforts. Focus group participants reflected on this statement and responses varied in their opinions, types of actions words and levels of motivation they perceived impacted their best effort approach. The participants unanimously agreed that their AVID teachers in fact motivated them to give their best efforts. These answers aligned with the Likert survey

responses. Some examples of participants' responses include, "Whenever I feel stressed out or sometimes I feel like I just wanna give up, he always encourages me to try my best (P8997); "With my AVID teacher, when we do tutorials on Tuesday, she goes around checking our grades, and she always has the right responses to motivate us and help us get our grades better " (P3297); and "My AVID teachers throughout my high school year have motivated me to set goals. Minor little goals such as personal goals to achieve" (P6417).

Table 1

HS1 Response to Statement: *The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in class.*

HS1	Findings
P8997 Grade 11:	"I cannot see my AVID teacher every day. He always gives me advice and always tells me what classes work for me and which don't. Whenever I feel stressed out or sometimes I feel like I just wanna give up, he always encourages me to try my best. No matter how much I do, no matter if it takes up to five in the morning to just finish that assignment, I get it done no matter ... because I wanna make him proud of me."
P1050 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher motivates me to do my best effort by sometimes giving a life lesson or telling us about his experience and talking about his...him giving...like what would you rather do, give your best work or crappy work. So, yeah, that's how I relate to that."
P3084 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher motivates me because he taught me to go ... to think outside the box, which means, like for example, not just going to a two-year, but thinking outside the box, like out-of-states, four-years, privates, and et cetera."
P4576 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher has motivated me, especially this year, with making the decision of what college I am going to attend. But in life, he has helped me for the past three years that I have known him with all my other classes."

N=4; HS1 = High School 1.

Table 2

HS2 Response to Statement: *The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in class.*

HS2	Findings
P0908 Grade 12:	"I believe that my AVID teachers really motivated me by telling me that our life and our future, things that are not going to be easy and she tells us to expect that there's gonna be difficulties in life and in school and she tells us to just keep our head high."
P0467 Grade 12:	"My AVID current AVID teacher motivates me because everyday she comes in with a smile and ready to start the day, even though we have bad days, she says, 'just get back up and keep continuing your day because the next day's a better day.'"
P7167 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher motivates me to do my best in all my classes and give my best effort she always tells me no matter what happens, you can always succeed in life and everything you do will be rewarded at the end and if you ever need help, you can always come to me and just know that you will always be with me and I will always be by your side."
P5162 Grade 11:	"The AVID teacher motivates me to give my best effort in my classes, well for me at least she tells me that I can do whatever I can as long as I set my mind to it and if I keep going on and no matter what's going on anywhere else, as long as I'm at school and doing my best, it shouldn't matter who I am, or what I'm doing, as long as I'm doing the right thing in school. Everyday she comes into our class and she tries to give her best, even if something is going on at home, she tries her best for us."
P8542 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher motivates me to give my best effort in my classes. I 100% agree with this statement because my AVID teacher provides us to give our best attitude in and outside of class because impression is the key to give, to get recommendations from other teachers, also to gateway to other opportunities in different programs because character is the key in life."

N=5; HS2 = High School 2.

Table 3

HS3 Response to Statement: *The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in class.*

HS3	Findings
P2859 Grade 11:	"The AVID teacher does motivate me to do the best in my class because the support's always there every day, and she makes sure that we're on top of our grades."
P4593 Grade 11:	"My does motivate me and give me my best effort. Usually we get our grade reviews, and she just motivates me to do better, like go to tutoring. She gives me all these different things to better myself and my education."
P2123 Grade 12:	"I have a teacher, she does make us stay on top of our grades, which makes us better in school. They strongly recommend we go to tutoring. We also have tutoring here with college tutors that also help us. I do say that they do push us more, they motivate."
P3297 Grade 12:	"With my AVID teacher, when we do tutorials on Tuesday, she goes around checking our grades, and she always has the right responses to motivate us and help us get our grades better. Personally, I really like that. I really think she does motivate us to do our best at school.
P7346 Grade 12:	I think that my AVID teacher particularly motivates a lot of us. She's always on top of us telling us to get our grades us and encouraging us to do our best."
P2052 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher does help us in our education. We do weekly grade checks. If we have a low grade, she's always asking how could improve or what could we do to get a better grade in that class. She tells us about the resources that are out there and what to do with a teacher, like how to get help [inaudible 00:02:57]."
P7960 Grade 12:	"Our AVID teachers do motivate us to do our best to get the best grades possible. They also give us examples of the things waiting for us after we reach our goals. They don't just say, "Try to do your best." They say, "This is why you should try to do your best. "They give you a realistic view of what you could accomplish once you reach those [inaudible 00:03:27] grades, once you actually accomplish a task in the class.

N=7: HS3 = High School 3.

Table 4

HS4 Response to Statement: *The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in class.*

HS4	Findings
P8938 Grade 12:	"Throughout AVID, I was able to say that college was possible for me because of the teachers motivating me, I was able to know that never give up and that there is a possible way to get into AVID and into college."
P8616 Grade 12:	"During my 7th grade, I was in AVID. I didn't think much of it. I was basically forced into AVID because of my sister but once I got into high school, I started to see that AVID really did help me. It started motivating me to go to college and get into a four-year university and it has helped me with personal experiences also."
P6417 Grade 11:	"My AVID teachers throughout my high school year have motivated me to set goals. Minor little goals such as personal goals to achieve. Even throughout the 8th grade when I was in AVID, the teachers all helped me, even students in AVID helped me, but especially my high school AVID teachers."
P3080 Grade 11:	"So, my teachers in AVID have helped me overall by [inaudible 00:02:01] okay so my teachers in AVID have helped me motivate me, by I get easily stressed and I always tell them I'm going to drop out of school. I'm almost going to be 18 and I'm going to drop out and then they're like, "No, you're a really smart girl. You can make it to a really good university. You can get into these universities. You're a great student and you shouldn't give up because we see a great future in you." And when they told me that, it makes me want to do more than I already do. Like I'm going to be the person in the club next year and I didn't want to do it because I didn't think I was going to be able to do it, and my AVID teacher, she was like, "You can do it. That's going to look good and that's going to help you be a greater person." And I was I wish I hadn't convinced myself not to do it but she was trying to convince me to do it."

N=5; HS4 = High School 4.

Table 5

HS5 Response to Statement: *The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in class.*

HS5	Findings
P3520 Grade 12:	"My AVID teachers have motivated me to give my best effort in my classes."
P0952 Grade 12:	"Yes, my AVID teacher does motivate me and to give my best efforts in class."
P8087 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher motivates me to do my best effort in class all my classes mostly every day."
P8306 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher does motivate me to give my best effort in all my classes, even when times are hard or rough throughout the year. Just never give up."

N=4; HS5 = High School 5

A cornerstone to AVID's success over the three plus decades of their existence has been their clear understanding that students in the middle and who are potentially at-risk, will need academic support. Moreover, AVID students learn to seek their AVID teachers for academic support and in doing so, AVID teachers will often assist students in self-discovering of answers they seek without the AVID teacher providing easy ways out, thus giving answers. In his book, Matthews (2015) discusses the history and pathways AVID has forged from its beginnings. He wrote among other things he learned that AVID teachers and AVID tutors "Never give the answers: Learning belongs to the learner" (p. 73). Table 2.1 asked participants to discuss whether the AVID teachers supported them in their academic needs. Participants shared their comments. For example, in Table 7, "My AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs by printing out our transcripts . . . highlighting what classes we are struggling in." (P0908). Also, Table 9, "My AVID teachers support me in academic classes by having certain days, like tutorials, to help me understand my points of confusion. These tutorials helped me, not only in

my academic skills but personal skills as well" (P6417); and in Table 10, "The AVID teacher

does support me in my academic needs, whether she does not understand the subjects at all, if I

need help with any subject, she'll come up and help me" (P3520).

Table 6

HS1 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs.*

HS1	Findings
P4576 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher has supported me in my academic needs, especially when it comes to my grades and being on track."
P3084 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher supported my academic needs in such as grades and in classes such as government, Econ, and English."
P1050 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher supports me with my academic needs by having tutors in the classrooms keep up with us like almost every week and keeping up with our grades. They also talk about how we're doing, emotionally too."
P8997 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs by having tutors review constantly learning our subjects weekly. He checks on our grades to see that we're not slacking; if he sees that we have a low grade, he asks what's wrong. He provides emotional support just in case we're having one of those days or maybe we just don't feel like doing anything."

N=4; HS1 = High School 1.

Table 7

HS2 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs.*

HS2	Findings
P8542 Grade 11:	"I agree with the statement, also, because every Tuesday and Thursday, we make tutorials and sometimes we modify them, the tutorials, to be based on classes that we really need help and sometimes my AVID teacher would let us go into a separate room to focus on our studies or also make smaller groups to sort of like, find a way to fix our errors in certain classes."

P5162 Grade 11:   "The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs. I agree with that statement because whenever I know that she's an English teacher, so she can help us with certain subjects like math or science, but whenever we do need help for things like English and essays and stuff, she's always there to provide a hand and edit our essays and she's always willing to put time in to personal statements too, and if we are applying for different programs and we need letters of recommendation she puts that in for us. Also, if she can't help us, she finds somebody who can, so she'll find a certain tutor to try and give us the most time that even is she can't help us with it, she'll find somebody to do it and we always get what we need if we're struggling."

P7167 Grade 12:   "My AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs because every time I have not decent grades, she never gives up and she's always motivating me to turn in everything that is missing and must at least get a C or better for her to not be pushing me as much but she never stops pushing me or any of my other classmates."

P0467 Grade 12:   "My teacher supports me in my academic needs because she's there very early in the mornings so if I need tutoring, I can go to her class for tutoring and she tries to help all of us out with everything we need. She gives us time during class to do our homework when we need help, and as well as she does our recommendation letters, like this year, for all the seniors, she did a letter of recommendation which took a lot of time and were like 32 students and it was meaningful for us."

P0908 Grade 12:   "My AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs by printing out our transcripts for our schools and highlighting what classes we are struggling in. She usually fixes on Ds or Fs by putting 30 minutes or, plus an hour of tutoring for that class, and it's not only for me, for my academic needs, but for everyone in the classroom. She highlights all the struggles that you have during the classes so she makes us do tutoring."

_N=5;_ HS2 = High School 2.

Table 8

HS3 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs.*

HS3	Findings
P7960 Grade 12:	"All our teachers do support us in our academic needs to the best of their ability, but in my personal view, I believe that they can only build their half of the bridge. The student themselves have to build their half as well and accept the support because we can see many students in the AVID program who don't want the support, but many that do understand that it is there and they take it and they use it for their betterment."
P2052 Grade 12:	"My AVID teachers have helped us in our academic needs. They let us know where they offer tutoring and in what subject. They also let us know what AVID tutor is actually ... if they majored in that subject and they know about it, they tell us to go to our teachers or go to our friends to see their [inaudible 00:04:38]. They let us know where our resources can come from."
P7246 Grade 12:	"I believe that my AVID teacher is always supporting everyone in their academic needs. I think that she's always finding her ways of trying to help each one of us. She always tries to do her best supporting them with [inaudible 00:05:04]."
P3297 Grade 12:	"Personally, I really think my AVID teacher does support us in our academic needs. She'll go out of her way to talk to teachers that are having problems with her students. She does recommend tutoring. I really think that helping us like that is very good."
P2123 Grade 12:	"AVID does help us with our needs because as they said, they do help us, but they can only do so much for the kids. There's some kids that do want the support, and they pay attention to when a teacher does give them support. There's other kids that act like they want it, so the teacher helps them."
P4593 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher does support me in my academic needs. If I ever need a textbook, homegirl has them over there. It's like what you would expect from an AVID teacher. You're there for college support, and for you to go to college, you need academic support as well. She effectively does that."
P2859 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher does support me in my academic needs. She lets me know where I can get all my resources at, what I can do to bring up a grade."

N=7; HS3 = High School 3.

Table 9

HS 4 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs.*

HS4	Findings
P3080 Grade 11:	"So, my teachers helped me in my academic needs by giving us days to work on our classes that we needed help in. By having tutorials. Those tutorials are helping me get good grades in my classes. Right now, because of AVID I have five As and one B and two of those classes are AP."
P6417 Grade 11:	"My AVID teachers support me in academic classes by having certain days, like tutorials, to help me understand my points of confusion. These tutorials helped me, not only in my academic skills but on personal skills as well. Not only that but they even if the teachers don't teach me in a certain class, like Math they can help me set more examples, do practice problems, or even schedule me to tutoring. They will always help me in academics even if they're not teaching a certain subject."
P8616 Grade 12:	"My teachers will help me academically not only during tutorials, but also during regular class. Sometimes I need help in any class subject and I just go to them and ask them for help. Tutorials also help though. Whenever I have a difficult question, I just go up during tutorials and present my tutors help me a lot. They also explain the steps, the process and everything that is needed, but AVID teachers also help me."
P8938 Grade 12:	"My sophomore year AVID teacher would push me. I feel like I had the most help from her because she would help me learn higher academic words and she would push me to go off my limits. She told me to not be basic and always try to do more than what I can. My junior year as well, my teacher my first semester AVID teacher as well, they always found a way to keep pushing me and not to just. They motivated me to also to get into AP classes because they knew that would look good in my transcripts and for college to prepare myself."

N=4; HS4 = High School 4.

Table 10

HS5 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs.*

HS5	Findings
P8306 Grade 11:	"Yes, my AVID teacher does support me in my academic needs, whether it's some study time or any type` of support we need in support groups. My teacher always is there for our needs and is there to support not only myself as a student, but [inaudible 00:02:20]."
P8087 Grade 11:	"My teacher supports me in academic need when it comes to my classes, whether it be me going up to ask or in tutoring sessions."
P0952 Grade 12:	"My teacher does support me in my academic needs from basics to more advanced studying, even though she doesn't sometimes understand it, she does her best to try to help me out."
P3520 Grade 12:	"The AVID teacher does support me in my academic needs, whether she does not understand the subjects at all, if I need help with any subject, she'll come up and help me."

N=4; HS5 = High School 5

All students come to the classroom with some form of emotional need. Since AVID students come to the AVID elective with predisposed at-risk factors, such as middle-to-low GPAs, first generation college goer, or socioeconomic factors, it is critical AVID teachers develop not only a trusting bond with their AVID students, one that is among other things nurturing, it's just as vitally important these AVID teachers recognize how to address those emotional needs. Phillippo and Stone (2013) previously explained that the role breadth, or the degree to which teachers defined their roles to include the provision of various forms of social and emotional support to students.

Table 12 asked participants to evaluate how their AVID teacher(s) supported them with appropriate emotional advice. Participants shared opinions such as, "If I'm ever having a bad day, she talks to me and tells me that everything is gonna be okay, and if I ever need someone,

she will be there and she will help me get through whatever I'm going through" (P7167). Table 13 revealed, "To me personally, I've never gone to my AVID teacher and opened-up, but I've seen her support other people emotionally. If I would need to go to her, I would know that she would be there to help me" (P3297) and "My AVID teacher has helped me emotionally. She goes out of her way to help me. I explained to her my problems and what's bugging me and she comes and gives me her advice" (P2052).

Table 11

HS1 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.*

HS1	Findings
P8997 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher always gives me advice with problems I'm having at home, whether it be giving me the right advice, giving me support, him telling me that he's there for me, and just giving me support."
P1050 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher supports me emotionally with the appropriate advice. Last time, I was having ... I don't know ... I was just feeling sad and I felt comfortable talking to him. I feel like when I enter this classroom, everything is going to stay in here. I feel comfortable with my AVID teacher because he notices you. When you come in class he knows what's wrong and what's ...."
P3084 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher supports me emotionally with advice such as not stressing out with work and school and dealing with time management because every day I work 35 hours a week at Goodwill ... 35 hours a week ... and come to school and pass all my courses."
P4576 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher has supported me with appropriate advice, not only with personal problems, but also with public problems, and it has helped me a lot. Not only educational-wise, but just emotionally, too."

N=4: HS1 = High School 1

Table 12

HS2 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.*

HS2	Findings
P0908 Grade 12:	'My AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice with always being honest in life and school or in general. Being honest could be helpful with situations. Another emotionally appropriate advice that she gives us is being, showing integrity."
P0467 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher supports me emotionally by giving me advice because when I went through hard times she shared her own experience with me so it could help me continue working hard and not giving up when I'm going through hard times."
P7167 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice. If I'm ever having a bad day, she talks to me and tells me that everything is gonna be okay, and if I ever need someone, she will be there and she will help me get through whatever I'm going through."
P5162 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice in whenever there is something going on at home, or I have problems that are going on, she's one of the teachers that I go to first 'cause I know how well she knows me. So, if there's certain things going on she tells me not to focus on it and instead focus on my work so that if there is a problem I can one day hopefully be away from it and to focus on school and to not focus on what's going on and that just try to focus on what I'm doing and not what everybody else is doing, or if there ever like a temptation or something, to just focus on what I'm doing and not to try and follow what everybody else is doing, not follow on like the bandwagon."
P8542 Grade 11:	"Usually, my AVID teacher, for this statement, she would provide us with a Monday motivator that would tend to find some sort of connections towards in life in general or only searching for college, or sometimes she would say "just be realistic in your choices and also just realize that sometimes life hits you hard, but it's all just part of being examined in your capabilities."

N=5; HS2 = High School 2.

Table 13

HS3 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.*

HS3	Findings
P2859 Grade 11:	"I don't really open-up to my teacher, so I would have to disagree with that one."
P4593 Grade 11:	"It's not like the AVID teacher would kind of do that. It's like you have to go up to them. If they see you and they talk to you, then that's another thing. Usually, it's like the AVID tutor, they'll do that. We all connect on a social level. We're all on the same page at the end of the day. The next day, they will come to you, they'll give you advice. It's done."
P2123 Grade 12:	"I would have to pass on that question."
P3297 Grade 12:	"To me personally, I've never gone to my AVID teacher and opened-up, but I've seen her support other people emotionally. If I would need to go to her, I would know that she would be there to help me."
P7346 Grade 12:	"I would say that my AVID teacher has helped me individually, and she really has supported me emotionally, because there are times when I have opened-up to her and she has been there to hear me and give me the support that I need."
P2052 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher has helped me emotionally. She goes out of her way to help me. I explained to her my problems and what's bugging me and she comes and gives me her advice. It's not like when she gives you this advice she steps away. She actually goes back the next day. She's like, "How are you doing?" She checks up on you, so that's very helpful."
P7960 Grade 12:	"Our teachers do support us if they see that we have maybe an internal problem or conflict, they will try to reach out to us, but again it's up to us to take the helping hand, because I, myself personally, have taken it, and sometimes I've not. I know how it can feel to sometimes bottle it up and have it stress you out even more, versus actually taking a helping hand and understand that they're here to help you better yourself."

N=7; HS3 = High School 3.

Table 14

HS4 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.*

HS4	Findings
P8938 Grade 12:	"My teachers do support me emotionally. Last year, I never been afraid of success, but I always doubt it and I used to care a lot what other people used to think. And my AVID teacher explained to me and would give me advice how it's not always about all the people but it's about yourself and setting goals in your mind will help you to succeed. Throughout, my AVID teacher also would always. They get really close to you. All my AVID teachers I've had, have gotten really close to me and they have supported me. Any type of question I have about life or school they would give me any advice I needed."
P8616 Grade 12:	"This year I got really close to my AVID teachers not only because I've known them since I was a little kid because of my sister. They've seen me grow up but this year, I got really, really close to them. It got to a point where I could go to them with personal problems and they would help me find solutions. Not only would with my personal life, but also school-wise [inaudible 00:07:25] sometimes I felt like giving up, quitting, just dropping out of school and my AVID teacher helped me push myself to the limits which was not giving up, doing my work, and just basically succeeding in life and accomplishing my goals."
P6417 Grade 11:	"This year my AVID teacher has supported me emotionally since there are times where I feel I have negative emotions. I have thoughts because of personal problems or academic problems but this year my teacher has supported me telling me to remove all the negativity and put in positivity because they see more than just the regular tough student. They see a bright student that has a future in this world that has a lot of negativity and she wants me to push myself to become more positive than any other student in my class."
P3080 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher she has supported me emotionally because one day I was supposed to break down and the night before I was crying because of something that I missed my events. And I worked so hard, the whole season for that and I missed it. Not because of me, but because of my coach and I was angry and I wanted to cry and she helped me. She was like, "There's always next year. You can still work hard for next year."

N=4; HS4 = High School 4.

Table 15

HS5 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.*

HS5	Findings
P3520 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher does support me emotionally, with appropriate advice, whether it's a relationship out of school or inside school. She always has the best advice to give."
P0952 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher does support me emotionally, with appropriate advice, from outside relationships to my relationship with my girlfriend. She does support me emotionally."
P8087 Grade 11:	"My teachers in AVID have helped me out, throughout, emotionally, with academics and sports-wise and being able to be a teamwork player."
P8306 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher does support me emotionally, with appropriate advice, whether it's a relationship in the family that's broken, or something with a friend or a peer. The teacher helps me to keep those relationships and find better ways to manage them.

N=4; HS5 = High School 5

Tables 16 - 20 asked participants to verify whether their AVID teachers connected with them emotionally. Sadowski (2013) wrote that the line of connectedness between teacher and student is critical for positive outcomes (p. 30). More importantly, Sadowski (2013) also delineates that students see a direct connection between their relationships with teachers and their willingness to engage with academic matter (p. 30).

Participants shared, "My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me. I think that could be said for the whole class. She notices when somebody is having a bad day or when something happens or if somebody's emotions have been down" (Table 17; P5162). Participant 4593 had a different opinion in Table 18:

I would go with what another student said, that I've connected with previous AVID teachers, but with my AVID teacher it's different because as a junior it's really hard to

just control everything, your emotions. You're like dying with all this work. You have

AP classes. It's super difficult to even deal with stuff at home. I haven't connected with

my AVID teacher, but I know that the opportunity is always there. (P4593)

Table 16

HS1 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me.*

HS1	Findings
P4576 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher has connected emotionally with me because I have lost a parent, and he has too. So, it's just ... His advice has helped me a lot."
P3084 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher connects with me emotionally with personal, life and school."
P1050 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher connects with me emotionally, by checking up with me every two days or three and ...."
P8997 Grade 11:	"My past middle school teacher and I were very close. I remember freshman year, I didn't know how to adjust to high school. It was very hard on me. So, one day, I found myself going to middle school and she was there and we just talked for over an hour just talking about the differences about middle school and high school, and she really helped me understand how to actually get through the problem. And it was very ... it really did help me adjust to high school and it gave me a bigger understanding of what my goals are."

N=4; HS1 = High School 1.

Table 17

HS2 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me.*

HS2	Findings
P8542 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me. Yes, I agree with that statement because there are times where there are stressful times in especially junior year because of the numerous AP classes. She always reminds us to, that those classes are meant to be helpful, especially for college because they will give college credit, and to also to learn those writing skills that we learn in AP language classes."

P5162 Grade 11:   "My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me. I think that could be said for the whole class. She notices when somebody is having a bad day or when something happens or if somebody's emotions have been down. She tries to ask them what's going on because she genuinely wants to know and she cares about the student, not just as a paycheck but she thinks of the student as a person and not just a teenager and she understands that it's not just a problem that you go, that happens when you're a teenager that's just like that, but there's real things that are going on that somebody might be scared of or somebody may not feel safe at home or just different things that go on and she always understands that and she's always willing to understand and listen and I really think she's there for everybody, not just me. Not just her, but for everybody in the class."

P7167 Grade 12:   "My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me. I agree with that statement because she is always looking out for everyone and if she notices someone having a bad day or isn't themselves like they're very hyper or happy and they're just sad that day, she pulls them out of class and talks to them and asks them what's going on and she if she can help, she would be glad to be helping them so that they can get through what they're going through."

P0467 Grade 12:   "My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me because when we're going through hard times, especially because we practically grew up with her because we started freshman to senior year with her, it makes us more like a family and she becomes like our second mom. She's there to support us with anything, school personally, this last year I have been getting really sick and I hadn't been coming to school often and she made my AVID classmates make cards for me and send them to me and I felt like she really cared a lot 'cause not a lot of teachers take time to do that and it meant a lot because she's always there, if you're not there in school to talk to her, she'll send you a text or something asking if you're fine and she's there like any other mother would be. So, I really appreciate my AVID teacher a lot."

P0908 Grade 12:   "My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me by giving us advice about life in general. She usually tells us how we are. Every day she comes to us with a smile and that gives me a motivation to always be happy even though when we're down.

_N=5;_ HS2 = High School 2.

Table 18

HS3 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me.*

HS3	Findings
P7960 Grade 12:	"I would say that it's not a complete connection, but there is a feeling of safety there where I could go up to my teacher, tell them what would be bugging me or tell them what my decisions are. They would either support my decisions or they would try to aid me and say, "Well, maybe you could do that, but these are the outcomes. This is what could lead to these consequences." They will try to help you find out everything, so that you understand how it could affect you as a person, whatever decision you take or whatever advice they give you."
P2052 Grade 12:	"I'd say my AVID teacher does connect with me emotionally because she understands what I'm feeling, she gives me her support, and she makes me understand there's a solution to my problem or what I'm going through. That helps me as a student, and it motivates me, so I'm very thankful for that."
P7346 Grade 12:	"I would say that my AVID teacher does connect emotionally, because there are times when she understands you. She knows what you're going through. It's not so hard because she understands what you're going through."
P3297 Grade 12:	"Personally, I've connected with previous AVID teachers here at [HS3], but I've never connected with my AVID teacher emotionally, so there is that."
P2123 Grade 12:	"I would also have to pass on that question."
P4593 Grade 11:	"What do you mean emotionally? Like in class or having fun, or like when the class is bad? [inaudible 00:12:07] *emotions*."
Researcher:	"You can stop. It's all right [inaudible 00:12:10]. One of the things that has come out of my research on the emotional connection for students deal with one key word, trust. If the AVID teacher is someone you trust, that's an emotional connection. Think about it in this way. Are there teachers you don't trust, you would not share information with? Think of it from that perspective, and then how would you answer the question. I'll read it again so you understand what you want to say. If you're still not clear, I can rephrase the question."
Researcher:	"Let's take a 5-minute break so you can consider this question more."

Researcher:	"Ready? Okay. Here is the statement again: The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me."
P4593 Grade 11:	"I would go with what another student said, that I've connected with previous AVID teachers, but with my AVID teacher it's different because as a junior it's really hard to just control everything, your emotions. You're like dying with all this work. You have AP classes. It's super difficult to even deal with stuff at home. I haven't connected with my AVID teacher, but I know that the opportunity is always there."
P2859 Grade 11:	"I haven't connected emotionally with my teacher, but I have with my last year AVID teacher. I feel if I ever needed to trust someone, I know I can always count on my AVID teacher."

N=7; HS3 = High School 3.

Table 19

HS4 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me.*

HS4	Findings
P3080 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me by sharing her stories of how she dealt through her past and that gives me strength for my future."
P6417 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher has connected with me more this year than last year not only through emotions, but she has also told me stories of her past and it kind of relates to mine since there are times where I feel like giving up. She has told me that she tried giving up but she kept going forward and that is something I learned from her. Whatever happens just keep pushing forward."
P8616 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher usually tells us stories and sometimes I can connect to them. But there's times when I tell him a story and it really does bring him down, not only because it's something personal to me, but sometimes we both connect to what I'm going through or what he's going through and we just sit down sometimes and just talk about the struggles we both went through and how to overcome those struggles."
P8938 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher does connect with me because listening to his background or where he has come from makes me realize that I am capable also of accomplishing my goals and knowing that everyone goes one day through something and it is possible to overcome those challenges."

N=4; HS4 = High School 4.

Table 20

HS5 Response to Statement: *The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me.*

HS5	Findings
P8306 Grade 11:	"Yes, my AVID teacher connects with me emotionally, whether it's a hard time or something has happened that is even within my relationship. The AVID teacher always there to support and connect with me."
P8087 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher connects with me emotionally with me when there's hard times in family or schoolwork. I know I can have a helping hand or [inaudible 00:04:56] from them to come back to me and I know that they care for me in any situation."
P0952 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher does connect with me emotionally from ... Even she understands what we went through, like if I'm feeling stressed, she understands it if I'm feeling depressed or anything. She gets it, because she's been through what we've done."
P3520 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher less likely connects emotionally with me due to college applications and accepting the right school for myself."

N=4; HS5 = High School 5.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is the life-blood of public schools. Schools receive funding through the number of students who attend school daily. The more students who attend school daily, the more funding the schools/districts receive. However, AVID students have been historically viewed by many educators as being at-risk. One of those risk factors includes having poor attendance. Therefore, AVID teachers work hard to ensure AVID students understand the importance of attending school daily. The influence of the AVID teacher can be profound in this area provided previous steps in the connection process were made by the AVID teacher with their students. Lamdin (1996) explains that there is significance literature on correlations between attendance and academics (p. 156).

Tables 21 – 25 asked participants to evaluate the impact their AVID teachers had on them to attend school daily and whether they came to understand the importance of attending school daily because of their AVID teacher's influence.

Participant's responses included:

My AVID teacher has influenced me to understand the importance of attending school regularly because my sophomore year I wouldn't like to come to my fifth period, so I would just leave and he would tell me that that wasn't okay, because my grades were dropping, especially in that class. So, I started coming. (Table 21; P4576)

Another participant stated:

For my AVID teacher's influence, yeah, I've understood the importance of attending school regularly as required by law. Yeah, it's true. Again, as a junior, if you miss one day, you miss a whole semester. It's really hard to come back from just missing an hour of class. It's super difficult. I know that when my AVID teacher says you've got to come to school, you've got to come to school. (Table 23; P4593)

Table 21

HS1 Response to Statement: *As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly.*

HS1	Findings
P8997 Grade 11:	"Because of my AVID class, I always ... I feel comfortable coming to school. I'm ahead of the game in my classes, just reviewing content in my AVID classes weekly and it really helps me gain an edge over the other students overall. It's a really big support system, and I love it."
P1050 Grade 11:	"As a result of the AVID teacher's influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly because I don't find the need to question myself to come to class, it's just I have to. It's a part of my life, so I must do it. And, yeah, that's it."

P3084 Grade 12: "As a result of ... As a result of my AVID teacher influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly because my freshman AVID teacher. She told me the importance of coming to school every day, passing our courses is to get accepted to any private, or four-year university, graduate and get a degree."

P4576 Grade 12: "My AVID teacher has influenced me to understand the importance of attending school regularly because my sophomore year I wouldn't like to come to my fifth period, so I would just leave and he would tell me that that wasn't okay, because my grades were dropping, especially in that class. So, I started coming."

N=4; HS1 = High School 1.

Table 22

HS2 Response to Statement: *As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to*

understand the importance of attending school regularly.

HS2	Findings
P0908 Grade 12:	"Regardless of how my other teachers perform, my AVID teacher comes in real early in the morning, and she always opens the door, has an open-door policy in her classroom, so that anyone could come in. This includes either have tutoring or just having a place to hang out. I usually come early in the morning and I'm either the first or the second person in her classroom."
P0467 Grade 12:	"My AVID teacher influences me the importance of attending school regularly because if I don't have time for school she calls my parents to make sure that everything's fine and also because when I come back she makes sure that I have all my late work. I catch up with my classes and she tells me that if I can, to try my best to come to school because we don't want my grades to drop, as well she's always tried not to miss school in all our four years of high school, she only missed like 5-6 days in those 4 years and she taught us that even though she's really sick, she'll try to get back up and come to school to support us and be there for us."
P7167 Grade 12:	"Due to my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly because she always tells me that if you don't come to school you miss a lot in all of your classes, especially if you're taking AP classes or honors classes so I try to come to school every single day so I can have decent grades and not have to worry that at the end I won't be able to graduate or have to take summer school."

P5162 Grade 11:   "As the result of my AVID teachers influence, I have learned the importance of coming to school regularly. On one side she tells us that we have to come everyday or if we're sick to try our best to come so our grades don't fall and so we don't slip too back and also it makes it really hard for us when more work comes at us, so when we are here, we can do our work, you know, when we're at home we don't know what the work is, so we don't fall behind on homework and then classwork but also like in an emotional way she tells us that it doesn't feel the same when we're not there so some of our friends or some of the people that know us a lot or even heard that she, it doesn't feel the same in the class or that it doesn't, it just isn't the same way when one of us isn't there or the class isn't the same or different things like that, that it's just not the same when we're not there when she knows when we're missing and she doesn't feel the same, it's not the same class."

P8542 Grade 11:   "So, as the result of my AVID teachers influence I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly. I [inaudible 00:17:50] even if I didn't take AVID, I would understand that attending school is important. My AVID teacher, she always reminds us that even if the day that we are absent, to organize the plan of how you're going to catch up on the homework that you're behind on, and to communicate with your teachers of like the absence or stuff like that. Overall, I think what my AVID teacher was trying to get it in our head is that you need to communicate with your teachers or just to any adult of like whenever there's like an issue going on with [inaudible 00:18:35] and extracurricular activities or just a personal issue in general."

N=7; HS2 = High School 2.

Table 23

HS3 Response to Statement: *As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to*

understand the importance of attending school regularly.

HS3	Findings
P2859 Grade 11:	"I have come to understand the importance of coming to school because if you're not there you miss a whole subject. You've got to catch up on [inaudible 00:14:11] when others [inaudible 00:14:13]. That one that you miss, you can miss an important test, and you've got to be the one catching up doing it on your own time."

P4593 Grade 11: "For my AVID teacher's influence, yeah, I've understood the importance of attending school regularly as required by law. Yeah, it's true. Again, as a junior, if you miss one day, you miss a whole semester. It's really hard to come back from just missing an hour of class. It's super difficult. I know that when my AVID teacher says you've got to come to school, you've got to come to school."

P2123 Grade 12: "My AVID teacher has shown me an influence that I need to come to school regularly because me, as a senior, it's more like if you miss a day, your grade goes down. That grade goes down, and I go to summer school. You don't walk. You lose a privilege. For me, it's more stressful if you don't come [inaudible 00:15:31]. Also, with what another student said, if you miss a day, you miss a test, you have to make that up after school, lunch. You have to take your own time to do it. You can't take it during class if your teacher doesn't let you. So yeah, she has shown the influence of coming to school."

P3297 Grade 12: "As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, yes, I've learned to come to school every day. I do see what other students here are saying. I do see if I don't come to school, I see [inaudible 00:16:04] because we have tests every day sometimes. If I don't come, the grade does drop. When she comes around stamping our weekly checks, she does ask us and tells us we should come to school instead of missing because you don't feel like coming or when you're sick. You still have to power through."

P7346 Grade 12: "I would say that my AVID teacher, Ms. XXX, she has influenced me to come to school regularly. I would be that person who really wouldn't come to school, so I would be missing like three days out of the week, four days. It would be regularly. So, I see that impact to me now because I'm a senior, and my grades, they dropped. Trying to keep them up has been very hard due to that. She has really been an influence."

P2052 Grade 12: "My AVID teacher has influenced me and I have come to attending school regularly because of my AVID teacher's influence. She has taught me there is a consequence if you don't come to school or even if you come tardy. You could get a referral. That could affect you later in your progress, your education, your career. She has taught me there are consequences, both good and bad, to my decisions."

P7960 Grade 12: "The importance of attending school, I attribute this to my father because he inspired me to have a college dream and get a college education. Since I was in elementary school, he would always push me. Like, "Are you really that sick? Do you really feel like you need to stay home? Missing a day of school was missing a day of valuable information. That's how I received the importance of attending school regularly. That does not mean that the AVID teachers don't emphasize it as well. I've heard it throughout

four years of high school. AVID teachers say, "You must come to class. If you miss a class, you have to go and ask for the work." So, it's like you really didn't miss a day. Missing a day of class should be the last option for you. You find ways to make it to class. You should always be on top of your grades. You should always be there physically being able to take in the information. Even though I got my personal understanding of attending school regularly from my father, I still see the AVID teachers do emphasize it themselves."

N=7; HS3 = High School 3.

Table 24

HS4 Response to Statement: *As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to*

understand the importance of attending school regularly.

HS4	Findings
P8938 Grade 12:	"Not only my AVID teacher, but my AVID counselor as well has been a great part of my AVID experience. When I first transferred into this school, I was downgraded and they wanted to send me into continuation school and my AVID counselor was there and she saw my grades and saw the potential in me because of her I was able to stay in this school. And when it came the time to apply to college, she was there with me every step and she helped me. All my doubts, all my worries I had, she managed to help me from all that stress. My AVID teacher as well. All my AVID teachers have been a great influence for me because they never let me give up and they helped me. They told me what I needed to get into college because that has always been one of my goals and my AVID teachers have pushed me to accomplish those goals."
P8616 Grade 12:	"Before I wouldn't want to come to school anymore. I found school pointless. Like a waste of time, honestly. But once I started talking more to my AVID teachers, they persuaded me into coming to school. That school was very important because it's not only for your experience right now in the beginning but it's something that will benefit you in the future and they basically helped me out with learning that school is not only important to come daily but it's also something where you can learn more things that you would need later in the future."

P6417 Grade 11: "It wasn't until my sophomore year when I realized that coming to school regularly was important. Throughout my freshman year I realized that school wasn't going to be that important. It was going to come by slow but my AVID teacher in my sophomore year in the beginning of the year, she told us that attending school would not only affect our attendance or our grades but it would affect us as a person as well. She had told me that if you don't attend an event then there's no point for you. There's no point of signing up if you're not going to go. You just wasted your own time and someone else's time."

P3080 Grade 11: "The teachers that I have had in AVID have influenced me in attending school regularly because they told me if you come to school you're going to do greater in school and I've noticed that because there's some days that I just don't come to school and my grades start to drop from one day."

N=4; HS4 = High School 4.

Table 25

HS5 Response to Statement: *As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to*

understand the importance of attending school regularly.

HS5	Findings
P3520 Grade 12:	"As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly, because I understand that I need the education I'm receiving, and I know that it's important for me to attend every day."
P0952 Grade 12:	"As a result from my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly. She motivates me, she will motivate the whole class, and tries to get everybody to come in, even if it's for just tutorials or studying, she does her best to try to get us to come to class."
P8087 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher does influence me to attend school regularly, due to the opportunities that we have, and we'll miss out if we don't come to class and attend school regularly. If we don't attend to school regularly, they [inaudible 00:06:48] is to make up our work and plan ahead."
P8306 Grade 11:	"My AVID teacher's influence has helped me to gain a better understanding of why to attend school regularly. Not only will we miss out on our work, but we will miss the opportunities that we've been gifted to have this privilege to attend school regularly. This will not only help us

now, with knowledge, but help us grow as better students as we get into higher education."

In Tables 26 – 30 participants were asked explain their overall relationship with their AVID teacher(s). Matthews (2015) in his conclusion wrote, "One of the greatest strengths of AVID when compared to current educational fashions is that it trusts teachers, once trained, to make good decisions" (p. 253). The participant responses in Tables 26 - 30 clearly understand the importance and impact of their AVID teacher(s). Some examples include Table 26, "My overall AVID experience has been more than must memorable, it has helped me understand the importance of attending a four-year university. Also, it has helped me connect, not only with my peers, but with my teacher (P4576). Further responses included Table 28:

I would say that the teacher-student relationship, especially now is very important. The experience that I've gone through personally, has honestly been kind of crazy. I came to a point where I was like, "Oh, AVID's not gonna help, like not gonna help me." Then as I started in the program, being more involved, I came to a realization, it does help a lot. It's not just a program, it's more like a family. (P7316)

Participant P8938 stated:

For the most part, my overall experience in AVID was great. I think that my teachers have proved to me with their actions instead of their words that they actually wanted to help me. I feel that those were the most important teachers. I'm a really social person but with my AVID teachers it's something different. Building connections with them especially since I know they're going to help me for college, and most of the teachers I had were able to maintain the relationships with all students, not only with me so I think it was really great being in AVID these past four years. (Table 29)

Table 26

HS1 Response to Statement: *Explain your overall experience as it relates to your student-teacher experience.*

HS1	Findings
P4576 Grade 12:	"My overall AVID experience has been more than must memorable, it has helped me understand the importance of attending a four-year university. Also, it has helped me connect, not only with my peers, but with my teacher. And, not only school-related things, but personal stuff too."
P3084 Grade 12:	"My overall experience in AVID since freshman year was great because I had two amazing teachers. I had one during freshman and sophomore. She taught me the way how to be a better writer: not to be scared in public speaking. I remember she used to make me quote public speeches. I didn't like doing that but it taught me in the world outside of high school you have to do sometimes public speaking. And, my teacher I got junior year and for senior year, he taught me the importance of going to a university and getting a degree."
P1050 Grade 11:	"What I know about my AVID experience that relates to student and teacher experience is that all I've had two teachers and most of them ... they're kind of the same person. They care for you, they want you to go to college. It's like you really have to be gifted to be an AVID teacher."
P3084 Grade 11:	"My overall AVID teacher experience is overall amazing. I can't think of a better class to have where it prepares me for college. My teacher really helps me understand the importance of going to college, getting a degree, just having a great lifestyle overall. Because all the AVID teacher wants is the best for us, and I can't thank all my teachers that I've had over the years enough."

N=4; HS1 = High School 1.

Table 27

HS2 Response to Statement: *Explain your overall experience as it relates to your student-teacher relationship.*

HS2	Findings
P8542 Grade 11:	"Overall, my AVID experience has been the best. I'm very thankful for this opportunity because I see that AVID is very impactful for, not just being a program just to get in to college, but it's more like to, you learn life skills and from seeing from my AVID teacher tell us about the story of her life and how she went through being a teacher in certain schools and being a mom also outside of school, it just gives us a realistic example of how we're supposed to handle becoming an adult."
P5162 Grade 11:	"For me I think my relationship with my AVID teacher is really good, if there's ever something going on with me, personally, or academically I always tell her what I could or I try to get advice on what's going on, or is something wrong, something is going on she'll usually ask me before I even know and also with opportunities, she always helped me, but I think mainly I don't know if I would be in this position to think of going to a 4 year university straight out of high school, which is at the end of the day the main point of AVID is to get kids into colleges because I never really saw that where I grew up. I never really saw really my neighbors never did that, my family never did that and most of my family if they were to go to college, they would have went to community college first and then eventually transfer over and I never really got to see the side of students that go directly in to a four year university so I think she really helped me see that and that it is not a super big stretch and I think without having the relationship that I do with her, I don't think I'd ever be in the position that I am right now and I don't think I'd ever be doing this good in school or taking AP classes or taking honors classes because originally I just saw myself as a A,B,C student taking like CP classes and she showed me that I'm much more than that and I think that my relationship with her really grown so much compared to freshman year where I just didn't trust her and then like now it's different."

P7167 Grade 12: "My overall AVID experience has been great, I've been in AVID for about 6 years but once I started freshman year I was very shy, I didn't really wanna talk to my teacher, but as the years went by, I saw her as a second mom, not only for me but for all my classmates because she had always been there for us. She always tells us to keep on going because at the end its your future and it'll only benefit you and not anybody else and due to her I have been motivated to get my grades up and my main goal is to go a 4 year university in the fall so only because of her I have that goal because before that I wasn't really thinking about going to a 4 year college, just going to community and transfer, but because she has always been there for us that she motivates me to do my best."

P0467 Grade 12: "My overall experience and relationship with my teacher is amazing because as I started my freshman year, as a class we all grew and we saw how different each one of us is and how the teacher tries to support us in different ways because we're different. She became our second mom and we became a second family and we're always there to support each other, even though the bad times and she just always told us that it's important to go to a 4-year university, that it's not bad to go to a community college if that's their different route you have to take because of problems or economically so she supports us in every way. My classmates and myself, we're gonna attend a community college, she has helped us find another program like AVID to support us and help us economically so we can transfer in our second year to a 4 year. It's like really amazing to have her."

P0908 Grade 12: "My overall AVID experience and my teacher student relationship, I would say that it was pretty amazing as if it was having a second mom, or as a mentor showing us what should we expect after high school. As a teacher, the student relationship she really cares a lot about us, she plans a lot of college field trips, giving us real life experience of what to expect right after high school and she really motivates everyone in the classroom from her telling us her life experience and the hardships she's gone through."

N=5; HS2 = High School 2.

Table 28

HS3 Response to Statement: *Explain your overall experience as it relates to your student-*

teacher experience.

HS3	Findings
P7960 Grade 12:	"I would say that the teacher-student relationships through AVID, I've learned that those help a lot when it comes to your academics. The first teacher that I connected with wasn't an AVID teacher, and that taught me that all other teachers are as open to maybe an academic relationship as an AVID teacher would be. You can go up to any professor. You can talk to them. You can tell them if there's maybe a conflict with you attending class a certain day. They can help you make that up. You should always be open to going up to professors. The worst scenario would be them saying, "I'm sorry. I don't have time." Other teachers do help you understand that you should talk to your professors. Then, if you still don't feel comfortable with it, start with your AVID teacher because they're there to guide you and to help you maybe take that first step."
P2052 Grade 12:	"I think the connection with the teacher-student relationship in the AVID program is very important because my teachers, basically they help me go to college. If you don't establish that relationship since the beginning, a trustworthy relationship, then your time in the AVID program is just going to go to waste. I learn that if you actually trust a teacher, that will help you build stronger connections and talk to her about your aspirations and goals. It's very important to have a trustworthy relationship with teacher."
P7316 Grade 12:	"I would say that the teacher-student relationship, especially now is very important. The experience that I've gone through personally, has honestly been kind of crazy. I came to a point where I was like, "Oh, AVID's not gonna help, like not gonna help me." Then as I started in the program, being more involved, I came to a realization, it does help a lot. It's not just a program, it's more like a family. They're there for you. That's how I see it."
P3297 Grade 12:	"Personally, like I said in my last response, I have connected with another AVID teacher in the past, but not with my AVID teacher. I see that it's there, and I can take the opportunity. I know I can. I've seen her talk with others and how passionate she is to check in with everybody. I know that my AVID experience can be way better if I do go to her if I ever need her for anything."
P2123 Grade 12:	"My overall experience with my teacher, with my AVID teacher, I haven't really connected with her yet. I'm pretty sure I will sometime before I

graduate, but I connected a lot with my junior and sophomore AVID teacher, because he was also my football coach. He would be on me about my grades because of AVID, but also a little added motivation because of football. I would say my overall experience was good. Like another student said, it's not really a class, it's more like a little separate family that you have at school. You connect with. You have trust. There's that little group that you have in the class you're really close with."

P4593 Grade 11: "My overall experience with AVID and the teacher-student relationship ever since middle school has been spot-on. Teacher, after teacher, they're there for you to force you to succeed, and it's always been like that. I was kind of hesitant beginning my junior year with my AVID teacher because it was kind of different going from a sophomore to a hardcore junior. Let it be known that junior year is the worst year in high school. It's fun because she makes it fun. I know I can joke around with her and call her home girl. It's fun. It's a great experience, and I just like it."

P2859 Grade 11: "I've been in AVID since 7th grade, and relationships with teachers ... the first one when I first came into AVID when I was younger, I realized that the years would pass by, I would get a new AVID teacher. I realized that mostly all the AVID teachers, you can have a really good bond with them if you want to open up, have that bond with them, it's always going to be there. As of right now, I haven't personally opened-up with my teacher, but I'm sure I will, maybe my senior year. Last year I did open-up to one of my AVID teachers. She was really amazing because you could talk to her about anything. You can play around. You can trust her. The bond was just really good. Hopefully next year maybe I grow a bond with my teacher."

N=7; HS3 = High School 3.

Table 29

HS4 Response to Statement: *Explain your overall experience as it relates to your student-teacher experience.*

HS4	Findings
P3080 Grade 11:	"So, my overall experience in AVID. I always get close to my AVID teachers because I feel like if I get close to them they're going to be able to understand me better and help me better."
P6417 Grade 11:	"I've been in AVID since 8th grade and very beginning of 8th grade I learned that if I get close to my teachers, they'll not only will they help me academically, but they will help me as a person as well."

P8616 Grade 12:	"I've been in AVID since my 7th grade but wasn't til my sophomore year that I started to realize that getting closer to your AVID teachers is important, not only because they can help you in everything, but it's something that you can use later in the future if you need anything from them, they'll help you because they treat you as a family. I've known these teachers for a couple years, since I was a little kid. They see me grow up and I got really close to them. They've met my family and honestly, I wouldn't ask for any other teacher but them because they really know me, and they know the things. They know what to do to help me out with not only AVID, but also academically and in life."
P8938 Grade 12:	"For the most part, my overall experience in AVID was great. I think that my teachers have proved to me with their actions instead of their words that they actually wanted to help me. I feel that those were the most important teachers. I'm a really social person but with my AVID teachers it's something different. Building connections with them especially since I know they're going to help me for college and most of the teachers I had were able to maintain the relationships with all students, not only with me so I think it was really great being in AVID these past four years."

N=4; HS4 = High School 4.

Table 30

HS5 Response to Statement: *Explain your overall experience as it relates to your student-*

teacher experience.

HS5	Findings
P8306 Grade 11:	"My overall experience in AVID, when it comes to the teacher-student relationship is it's been very strong. I've maintained a [inaudible 00:07:44] connection with my AVID teacher, whether it's rough times or what my grades are like or whatever circumstance academically or emotionally. It could be my connection with the AVID teacher has been strong."
P8087 Grade 11:	"My experience with AVID with teacher-student relationship has been marvelous. They have showed me that school is worth it, and we should be attentive every day and be grateful for the opportunity that we have in the AVID program and outside of the AVID program. Just knowing that they care for us and will stick by our side whenever we need it."

P0952 Grade 12:   "My overall AVID experience with the student-teacher relationship, they do motivate me through times of need, also. They see if I'm struggling or anything, they will help me out. Yeah, overall, they do help me out the best they can."

P3520 Grade 12:   "My overall AVID experience in a teacher to student relationship has been very strong, but emotional at the same time. They honestly do care about our feelings and how we're able to work outside of school and at home and inside the classroom as well."

N=4; HS5 = High School 5.

Summary

The significance of Chapter 4's findings become clear as it was related to the impact AVID teachers have on their 11th and 12th grade AVID participants. Data was examined from 479 participants (including five high schools) in the areas of quantitative data analysis, including a Likert survey where participants evaluated their AVID teacher-student relationship as it related to their academics, social-emotional wellbeing, and how these teachers impacted them on attending school daily. Furthermore, qualitative data gathered from five focus group discussions formed a triangulation of data that soundly aligned the data and validated that there was significant value in the teacher-student relationship.

The three research questions were addressed. One: *How is the AVID student's academic performance impacted by the support from the AVID teachers?* Participants overwhelmingly answered the *academic* portion of the Likert survey, with favorable ratings of (Completely Agreed; Agreed), and participants ranked these statements from mid-80 to high-90 percentiles (see Figures 8 – 17). Additionally, focus groups discussed favorable personal anecdotes as to how their AVID teachers impacted their ability to perform academically (see Tables 1 - 30).

Research question two: *How do the AVID students behave socially and emotionally resulting from the AVID teacher's influence?* Participants expressed their strongly held beliefs

that their AVID teachers influenced their social and emotional behaviors. The Likert survey found strong evidence that participants made social and emotional connections with their AVID teachers and peers alike (see Figures 18 – 27). Evidence of these sentiments were also found in the focus group discussions, (see Tables 1 - 30), thus providing a direct correlation and triangulation of data agreement.

Question three looked at: *How has the AVID teacher impacted the AVID students' school attendance?* Data gathered was not as favorably rated to the higher percentiles as was seen in statements one and two. Nevertheless, the data did reveal that participants' AVID teachers had indeed influenced participants' ability to clearly understand the importance of attending school daily (see Figures 28 – 32) and (see Tables 1 - 30).

The findings in Chapter 4 are consistent with the literature reviews from Chapter 3. Sabol and Pianta (2012) wrote students succeed in school when at least caring one-adult, not necessarily a parent, is perhaps the single most important element in protecting young people who have multiple risks in their lives, and for many people this adult is a teacher. Moreover, Votto (2003) found that positive teacher-student relationships are a significant contributor to academic achievement and motivation and prevention of dropping out, bullying and violent behaviors. Finally, Klem and Connell (2004) found high levels of engagement are associated with higher attendance and test scores—variables that strongly predict whether youth will successfully complete school and ultimately pursue post-secondary education and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The researcher examined the impact of the teacher interaction in the AVID program. Evidence and data provided by participants validated the researcher's theory that AVID teachers positively influenced their student's academics, social and emotional behaviors, and impacted participants' willingness to attend school at a greater rate.

The triangulation of data consistently revealed a strong correlation of qualitative and quantitative approaches to suggest there is an extreme importance between the AVID teacher and the AVID participants in this study. The Likert survey, administered to 479 participants, responded to 25 statements. The findings revealed that academically, the participants experienced a unique connection to their AVID teacher(s) positive influence, which resulted in greater academic achievement. Also, the findings positively impacted sincere and typically uncommon social-emotional support from the participants' AVID teachers for their social-emotional wellbeing. Lastly, findings resulted in participants' acknowledgement of their AVID teacher's critical emphasis to attend school daily.

Summary of Likert Survey Findings

When taking into consideration the totality of all 25 Likert survey statements that measured participants' perceptions of their AVID teacher(s), and how that relationship influenced participants' academics, social-emotional wellbeing, and a greater willingness to attend school more, the data revealed a high favorable rating (93.45%) by participants who responded either Completely Agreed or Agreed, thus leaving a mere (6.55%) of participants responses in non-agreement status (see Figures 8-32).

The Likert survey did reveal; however, a slightly negative pitch towards participants' perceptions of how their AVID teachers influenced the participant's daily attendance. Participants Disagreed or Completely Disagreed at a (17.006%). Most of this decline sat in two of the five Likert survey attendance statements. Figure 30: *The AVID teacher will call home when I'm not in school for an extended length of time*, had a Disagree percentage of (29.11%). Meanwhile, Figure 31: *When compared to other teachers, I will always let my AVID teacher know when I have a planned absence*, reflected a Disagree percentage rate of (25.00%).

The findings also addressed the research questions. Question one: *How is the AVID student's academic performance impacted by the support of the AVID teachers?* The data supports the researcher's theory that by having a positive teacher-student relationship, participants will improve academically. The Likert survey portion for academics indicates an extreme correlation between the success of the participants' academics and that of the positive nature of the AVID teacher and the participant. Additional evidence was explored in the GPA comparisons of the AVID participant and the non-AVID student. A five-semester look at these groups validate that AVID participants consistently maintained higher overall GPAs for all five semesters than non-AVID students. Finally, the focus group participants spoke openly on their relationships with their AVID teachers on how they felt their AVID teachers impacted their academics through their relationship. All participants in the focus groups produced candid remarks that reflected their AVID teachers had a positive role and impact in their ability to succeed academically.

Question two was address: *How do the AVID students behave socially and emotionally resulting from the AVID teacher's influence?* The participants provided evidence that they greatly appreciate their AVID teacher's support in their social and emotional behaviors.

Socially, the Likert survey revealed evidence that participants expressed overall a high rate of agreement and favorability as to how their AVID teachers provided a stream of emotional support to influence them academically, environmentally, and culturally. The evidence also strongly suggested that the impact of the AVID teachers affected participants sense of feeling safe and improved their ability to create new relationships through peer networking.

The Likert survey explored the emotional aspect too. Data supports participants recognized the AVID teacher's impact on their emotional needs. Participants were able to show high rates of agreement when presented with issues such as how they connect emotionally with their AVID teacher, how they receive positive-emotional advice, and how they appreciate the emotional awareness of positive recognition. Further, participants appreciated with a high rate of agreement their physical and emotional safety while in their AVID class and in their AVID teacher's presence.

Focus group discussions added another layer of overall, strong agreement that their AVID teachers do indeed support the participants with social and emotional support. The 24 focus group members expressed a nurturing, caring and welcoming environment when in their AVID teacher's presence and or when involved in AVID related activities. Further, participants reported that their AVID teachers were one of the most influential people in their lives when there is need to express social and or emotional concerns. Participants consistently expressed feeling emotionally safe and socially accepted by their AVID teachers.

The third research question found a lessoning impact was established from their AVID teachers. Question three: *How has the AVID teacher impacted the AVID students' school attendance?* Participants from the Likert survey were mixed on their AVID teacher's ability to positively impact them to attend school regularly. Two of the five statements revealed moderate

levels of disagreement. Potential causes for this disagreement will be discussed in Likert

statement attendance findings below. However, notwithstanding these two outlier results,

participants expressed overwhelming agreement their AVID teachers did indeed influence them

to attend school daily. Participants also expressed through Likert results their ability to attend

school regularly, and how their AVID teacher(s) impacted their levels of motivation to attend

regularly. In high agreement was the participants' acknowledgement that with influence from

their AVID teacher(s), participants came to an understanding that attending school daily is

critical for overall positive school experiences and success.

In focus group discussions, participants were asked only one question regarding

attendance: *As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to understand the*

importance of attending school regularly. Participants from the focus group continuously

reflected on their AVID teacher's impact on them to attend school regularly. For example,

participants routinely stated that their AVID teachers had great influence on expressing the

importance of attending school daily. Participants shared how that importance shaped their

philosophical approach to improving grades, attendance, AP coursework, extracurricular

activities, and potentially taking summer school classes. Participants also became acutely aware

as to why dropping out of school can occur as a result of not caring about their education.

Additionally, the district wide five-semester data provided on the five high schools

studied, consistently revealed that AVID participants in both grade 11 and 12 had a higher

dependability rate to attend school more frequently than their non-AVID peers.

The Likert survey was a three-part effort for the participants. Most participants took less

than five-minutes to complete the survey entirely, while the average time to complete the survey

was four minutes, fifty-three seconds (4:53). The three-parts included 10 statements on

academics, ten statements on social-emotional growth, and five statements on daily attendance.

Nearly all participants answered all 25 statements. However, there were sprinklings of students

who did not respond to a least one of the survey's statements and even fewer who did not

respond to more than one. The researcher did not draw a conclusion as to why this may have

occurred.

    Likert academic statement findings. Part one of the Likert survey asked participants to

respond to 10 statements of how their AVID teacher(s) influenced their academics. Responding

students either Completely Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed or Completely Disagreed to the ten

statements in this section. There were 479 participants who logged in to take the survey. Only

statement three was answered by all 479 participants, while the remaining nine other statements

were replied to by either 476, 477, or 478 participants.

    The ten academic statements allowed participants to gauge their beliefs and personal

understanding of how much impact their AVID teacher(s) had on them in their academic careers.

None of the 10 statements asked participants to draw comparisons to other non-AVID teachers,

nor did any statements ask participants to compare AVID teachers when considering the

statements. The 10 statements were designed to allow participants thoughtful reflection of

everyday scenarios they would encounter in the AVID classroom environment. For example,

when participants addressed the statement, *The AVID teachers provided clear expectations for*

my academic performance, (in which 98.54% responded favorably to), AVID participants would

take into consideration that their AVID teachers do bi-weekly grade checks, monitor the

academic progress in all their classes, speak to other teachers of the participants about their

academics and behavior deficiencies, set participants on academic probationary status when

falling too far behind academically, contact parents, and most importantly, serve a source of

motivation, inspiration and academic support for the participants when they face challenging times in their academic growth. These are AVID teacher characteristics known by all AVID students; therefore, they are prime examples of how AVID participants would measure the posed statement.

Participants responded to all 10 academic statements at a Completely Agreed or Agreed combined rate of 95.12%, while disagreement levels were a mere 4.88%. Another example of how participants gauged their responses to academic portions lays in the statement, *The AVID teachers provide academic support for me,* where 99.16% of participants responded favorably. In this statement, all participants first inclination would most certainly be AVID's tutorial process and support. It is in the AVID class and the AVID tutorial process where participants, working in collaborative group settings, explore for example, common subject-like matter of the group members, then seek to resolve their points-of-confusion with the support of their collaborative peers, a college-age AVID trained tutor, and if necessary the AVID teacher. It is in these bi-weekly tutorials where participants would most certainly feel that their AVID teachers provide academic support. However notwithstanding, other forms of academic support also occur during the typical AVID day. For example, practicing and using Cornell focused note taking methods, using inquiry as a process to gain greater insight to a point-of-confusion or during a Socratic seminar discussion, practicing college writing skills, accessing greater vocabulary usage, speaking and listening activities, or building a network of peers for academic sources and support just to name a few.

With a favorability rate of 95.12%, the 10 academic statements in the Likert survey clearly reflected the participants overwhelming appreciation of their AVID teachers' efforts in providing various forms of academic support. AVID data on a national level supports the

researcher's hypothesis. In their AVID home page, Data / Data-Proven Results (n.d.), AVID reports the class of 2017 graduates, where at least 75% of AVID seniors took one AP course, 93% of seniors completed four-year college entrance requirements, ninety-six percent of seniors took the SAT or ACT exams, 90% of seniors were accepted into four-year colleges, and perhaps the most intriguing stat, when compared to the 78% national U.S. average of non-AVID students, 85% of AVID students maintained a higher rate of *persistency* to remain in college for two or more years. Conclusively, the data from the five high schools reflect many of the national average trends. Although this report does not compare the national AVID statistics to any of the Likert survey statements, all the statements do lend themselves as factors contributing to taking AP courses, completing four-year college entrance requirements, taking SAT or ACT exams, college acceptance rates, and greater sense of persistency for completing college beyond one-year. The AVID's teacher role in connecting these vital academic links are all paramount to the AVID teacher-student relationship, thus success in academics and overall positive school experiences.

  Likert social-emotional statement findings. Part two of the Likert survey asked participants to respond to 10 statements of how their AVID teacher(s) influenced their social-emotional growth. Responding students either Completely Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed or Completely Disagreed to the ten statements in this section. There were 479 participants who logged in to take the survey. Most participants answered all ten statements. However, all ten statements did experience at least two-participants who did not answer at least one statement, and Figure 25, had five participants who did not respond.

  The 10 social-emotional statements (five social, five emotional) allowed participants to gauge their beliefs and personal understanding of how much impact their AVID teacher(s) had

on their feelings towards aspects of social and emotional growth. None of the ten statements

asked participants to draw comparisons to other non-AVID teachers, nor did any statements ask

participants to compare AVID teachers when considering the statements. What is SEL? (n.d.)

explains the social-emotional concept as: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)—The process

through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and

skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set positive goals, feel and show empathy

for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

The 10 Likert social-emotional survey statements allowed participants to consider their

social capacity and emotional beliefs (feelings) in a non-threatening manner, one of which the

survey's anonymous nature afforded participants to freely reflect their true feelings towards each

statement, while taking comfort in knowing they could be openly honest with how they feel

towards responding to the statements. For example, a social statement, Figure 18 stated: *The*

AVID teacher makes me feel safe in their presence. Responding participants found an extremely

high favorability in this statement where they Completely Agreed or Agreed at a 97.70%. It is

unclear why 2.30% of participants did not feel this way; however, seeing that the survey is

anonymous and participants were receptive in answering the statements, no conclusion is being

drawn as to why. Nevertheless, AVID teachers do have skills that make their students feel safe

in this social setting, including the AVID teachers' knack for investing in relationships,

providing a nurturing and family-like community, engaging and motivating students, and quite

critically, by hosting a nurturing atmosphere that is student-centered—as AVID touts in their

website—including: Peer tutoring, focus note taking, collaboration, embedded soft skills,

classroom set-up, teacher facilitated learning, college readiness environment, inquiry based

activities, higher level of thinking activities, and reading-writing to learn (The AVID Difference / The AVID Difference, n.d.)

As evidenced by the contributing data from the participants, the social aspects of a learning environment are critical if the teacher-student relationship is to flourish. As previously detailed by Pianta (1999) the importance of the emotional aspect when he explained the evidence influenced by children's teachers regarding emotional development. Pianta (1999) wrote that the teacher-student relationship, like the child-parent relationship, regulates emotional development for the student, including the interpretation of emotion, emotional cues, and the strategies for self-regulation.

The Likert survey positioned five socially grounded statements for participants to consider. One statement: *The AVID teacher supports me with appropriate advice,* (responded favorably by 89.43% of the participants), allowed AVID participants to consider how their AVID teacher influenced and or advised on important topics such as which rigorous courses to take from year-to-year, how to manage their extracurricular activities (i.e., clubs to join, organizations to participate in, volunteering opportunities). The AVID teacher's influence would also be keenly weighed upon by the participant in their senior year of high school when considering colleges to apply for, shaping personal college statements, whether to take challenging AP courses and which AP courses to take, how best to manage their time, or perhaps more personally, how to build a network of peers and alike to support the social challenges.

Participants relied heavily on their AVID teachers' influences when it comes to social and emotional growth. As evident by the data, a combined high favorability rate of participants depended upon their AVID teacher(s) to support them socially and emotionally with appropriate guidance and advice to navigate high school's ever challenging dynamics.

Likert attendance statement findings. As referenced earlier in this report, there is a lack of empirical evidence that shows how teachers can influence a student's willingness to attend school regularly. More important, virtually no data exists in measuring how important that data is when taking into consideration the teacher-student relationship. The last five statements of the Likert survey looked at that dynamics of this phenomenon and what impact the teacher-student relationship had on the participants' willingness to attend school.

Part three of the Likert survey asked participants to respond to five statements of how their AVID teacher(s) influenced their willingness to attend school regularly. Responding students either Completely Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed or Completely Disagreed to the five statements in this section. There were 479 participants who logged in and took the survey. Most participants answered all five statements. However, all five statements did experience at least three-participants who did not answer all five statements. The researcher has no opinion as to why participants chose not to answer all five statements.

The Likert survey portion for attendance revealed an 82.99% agreement rate for the five statements in which participants responded. The data is considerably lower in overall student-agreeability rate compared to the academic component (95.12%) and social-emotional (91.53%) component of the Likert survey. Reasons for this decline will be discussed in the Interpretation of Findings later.

The five attendance statements allowed participants to reflect on their personal attendance habits and consider how much impact their AVID teacher(s) had on them in their willingness to attend school daily. One of the five statements asked participants to draw comparisons to other non-AVID teachers. The five statements were designed to allow participants thoughtful reflection of daily reasons or scenarios they would consider for missing

school, and whether their AVID teacher's influence made a determining factor in their decisions to attend school daily. Figure 32 statement asks participants to consider the impact their AVID teachers do have on them: *As a result of my AVID teachers' influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly.* Participants responded to this statement at a 92.03% rate of favorable agreement.

The Likert survey did reveal a slightly negative lean towards participants' perceptions of how their AVID teachers influenced the participant's daily attendance. Of these five statements, participants Disagreed or Completely Disagreed at a 17.006%. Much of this negative decline lay in two of the five attendance statements—Figures 30 and 31. Figure 30: *The AVID teacher will call home when I'm not in school for an extended length of time*, had a Disagree percentage of 29.11%. Meanwhile, Figure 31: *When compared to other teachers, I will always let my AVID teacher know when I have a planned absence*, reflected a dissatisfaction percentage rate of 25.00%.

Focus Group Findings

Twenty-four participants were queried in focus groups. Those results revealed an even higher sense of favorability that their relationship with their AVID teacher was a key factor in their motivations to succeed in school. Participants spoke candidly about their relationship and support they received from their AVID teachers regarding academics, social-emotional wellbeing and attending school. To illustrate this sense of favorability, focus group transcriptions revealed, for example, a grade 12 participant explaining how the teacher-student relationship impacted their academics:

My AVID teacher motivates me to do my best in all my classes and give my best effort. She always tells me no matter what happens, you can always succeed in life and

everything you do will be rewarded at the end and if you ever need help, you can always

come to me and just know that you will always be with me and I will always be by your

side. (P7167)

Meanwhile, a grade 11 participant reflected:

The AVID teacher motivates me to give my best effort in my classes, well for me at least

she tells me that I can do whatever I can as long as I set my mind to it and if I keep going

on and no matter what's going on anywhere else, as long as I'm at school and doing my

best, it shouldn't matter who I am, or what I'm doing, as long as I'm doing the right thing

in school. Every day she comes into our class and she tries to give her best, even if

something is going on at home, she tries her best for us. (P5162)

Participants also experienced a greater sense of *social* and *emotional* support from their

AVID teachers. For example, participants were prompted whether their AVID teachers provide

a welcoming social environment. Again, participants replied to the survey with extremely high

sentiments that their AVID teachers did indeed support them with a welcoming social

environment. A grade 12 participant expressed their social experience this way:

My AVID teacher has helped me emotionally. She goes out of her way to help me. I

explained to her my problems and what's bugging me and she comes and gives me her

advice. It's not like when she gives you this advice she steps away. She actually goes

back the next day. She's like, 'How are you doing?' She checks up on you, so that's very

helpful. (P2052).

Comparatively, participants also mirrored similar feelings in the focus group regarding

emotional support. For example, when asked if participants felt emotionally safe in their AVID

class, participants again found this statement to be truthful at a high rate. For instance, a grade

12 participant spoke eloquently regarding whether the AVID teacher supported them emotionally with appropriate advice:

> Our teachers do support us if they see that we have maybe an internal problem or conflict, they will try to reach out to us, but again it's up to us to take the helping hand, because I, myself personally, have taken it, and sometimes I've not. I know how it can feel to sometimes bottle it up and have it stress you out even more, versus actually taking a helping hand and understand that they're here to help you better yourself. (P7960)

The findings regarding the AVID teachers' impact on their students' ability to attend school daily were also affirmed, especially when compared to their peers (or non-AVID students of the same grade levels). District data supported the theory that AVID participants of this study do indeed have a better dependability rate to attend school at a greater rate when compared to the non-AVID students of the same grade range (see figure 33).

Furthermore, when participants were surveyed with the statement: *As a result of my AVID teachers' influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly*, participants Completely Agreed or Agreed with the statement at an extremely high rate (92.03%) (see figure 25). Evidence of this includes an assertion by a grade 12 participant who stated in focus group discussion:

> Before I wouldn't want to come to school anymore. I found school pointless. Like a waste of time, honestly. But once I started talking more to my AVID teachers, they persuaded me into coming to school. That school was very important because it's not only for your experience right now in the beginning but it's something that will benefit you in the future and they basically helped me out with learning that school is not only

important to come daily but it's also something where you can learn more things that you

would need later in the future. (P8616)

Interpretation of Findings

Likert survey statements from the academic, social-emotional and attendance sections

related to the participants' perceptions of the importance of the teacher-student relationship. The

researcher found data supporting high rates of causal for improved student outcomes. The data

strongly suggests that by having a positive teacher-student relationship within the AVID elective

class, the participants, in their own perceptions, and in data provided, did indeed blossom

academically, socially-emotionally, and have improved attendance. Likert survey statements

(Figures 8 – 32) rated that relationship as it related to participants' academics, social-emotional

growth and daily attendance. Participants surveyed responded (Completely Agreed or Agreed)

at a 95.12% rate that their AVID teachers did impact their academics positively with ongoing

influence and support. In other words, the participants deeply valued their AVID teacher's

support in aiding their academic outcomes. Likert survey participants also agreed at a high rate

of 91.53% that their AVID teachers supported them emotionally and socially, and at a combined

favorable agreement rate of 82.99% for Likert statements related to attendance.

When taking into consideration the totality of all 25 Likert survey statements that

measured participants' perceptions of their AVID teacher, and how that relationship influenced

participants' academics, social-emotional wellbeing, and a greater willingness to attend school

more, the data revealed a high agreement rating of 93.45% by participants who responded either

Completely Agreed or Agreed, thus leaving a mere 6.55% of participants' responses in

disagreement status (see Figures 8-32).

Academic Interpretations

Since AVID's inception in 1980, founder Mary Catherine Swanson's AVID philosophies, methodologies and support systems have been designed to be ever-adapting to the academic best practices across the country, and in fact, the world. At the core of the many academic components that make up the curriculum of AVID's success is the basic principal that all students can learn given the right environment (positive teacher-student relationships), opportunities (i.e., allowing students to challenge rigorous curriculum) and resources (i.e., opportunities to explore colleges, network with peers and paraprofessionals-guest speakers, tutoring time, modeled learning and vast amounts of academic support such as providing AVID students college age tutors to support learning). It would also include well-grounded AVID-trained teachers to deliver all the available tools and resources which AVID provides, especially in today's delivery of instruction and pedagogical styles.

The participants in this study expressed extreme satisfaction with the support they received from their AVID teacher's positive influence and relationship. AVID's web page also touts that:

> AVID trains educators to recognize the unique circumstances that each student brings to the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to spend time throughout the year intentionally building relationships with their students. They start with low-risk relationship-building activities that progress into deeper connections, allowing teachers to tap into the knowledge and experiences students bring to the classroom.
> (Teacher Effectiveness / Teacher Effectiveness n.d.)
> It's directly in these relationships that academic growth is spawned. The data from the

Likert survey is incontrovertible. Participants feel academically connected and valued from

AVID teacher's support, such as bi-weekly tutorials, college age tutor support, and regular

assignment feedback. Figure 8, the highest among all participants for agreement, (99.16%),

reflected participant's perceptions that AVID teacher(s) did support them academically.

Participants were asked in Figure 9 whether they had alternative opportunities to learn

various subject matters. AVID teachers recognize when participants flounder or can't solve a

problem. When this occurs, AVID teachers will often utilize other strategies to support greater

opportunities for the participant to learn. Further, AVID teachers are historically championing

the "motivation dial" by continuously inspiring and encouraging their students that success is

real and obtainable despite the obstacles that lay in their way.

Perhaps one of the most critical functions AVID teachers do for their participants is to

provide feedback on assignments regularly. Figure 12 posed such a statement and measured

participants' beliefs that their AVID teacher provided constructive feedback on assignments,

which resulted in a 92.05% agreement rate. This is an extraordinarily high rate since the practice

of teacher feedback is a somewhat a lost-art and as such, AVID teachers embrace the

opportunities to allow students to redo assignments based on feedback and then resubmit. By

allowing this opportunity, points-of-confusion are routinely solved by the AVID student.

Moreover, by allowing students to self-discover—the greatest learning will occur. As Matthews

(2015) illustrated in his book previously, "Never give the answers: Learning belongs to the

learner" (p. 73).

AVID teachers tend to keep learning relevant as this is validated in Figure 15, where

participants had a combined agreement rate of 97.28%. One example of AVID teachers keeping

learning relevant occurs through the local community headlines, where AVID teachers will often

apply philosophical chairs or Socratic seminar discussions, thus engaging the participants to meddle in current and relevant events in and around their community, nation and world.

The 95.12% agreement rate in the ten Likert academic survey statements explain some of the how's and why's AVID's academic and AVID teacher support tools are vital to the participant's individual successes. When comparing participants to non-AVID peers across equal grade levels district wide, the AVID participants came out in front in all five of the academic GPA semesters provided. This is not to say non-AVID students did not shine in academics. In fact, this school district had numerous non-AVID students and AVID students who were in their Top-100 class ranks, who were Valedictorians and Salutatorians, and countless others from both groups who received other various academic achievement awards. Both groups had numerous college acceptances and received numerous scholarships.

It is noteworthy to mention that the importance of the AVID teacher-student relationship is the basic principle to all AVID students' academic successes. The working nouns, verbs and adjectives of each of the 10 Likert academic survey statements include some of the most basic needs of any student and include: Support, opportunity, meaningful learning, motivation, constructive criticism, expectations, engagement and assistance. When any teacher positions these action words into their daily curriculum outline, greater student expectations can then have a chance to grow.

Social-Emotional Interpretations

The Likert survey provided a rich data field to examine. Participants had a high favorability rating where they Completely Agreed or Agreed at a clip of 91.53% overall to the 10 social-emotional statements. This indicates that the participants were extremely drawn to receiving and appreciating their AVID teachers' ability to connect both socially and emotionally

with them. Of the 10 statements offered in the Likert survey, only five or 479 participants did

not answer one or more of the statements. The researcher makes no conclusion as to why this

occurred.

Examining the high favorability rate of these statements, Figure 19 stated, *The AVID*

teachers provide a welcoming social environment, and was responded to with an extreme

favorability rate of 97.9%. This would indicate that AVID teachers are continuously creating,

developing and nurturing an environment that is both welcoming and comfortably a safe place to

learn. As Doll et al. (2014) wrote, "The most essential ingredient in forging a safe, supportive

classroom environment would always be the quality and consistency of the teacher's sensitive

rapport with the students" (p. 18). Nelsen and Gfroerer (2017) stated, "Schools are social

environment—the perfect place to practice social-skills. And students who have strong social-

emotional skills are more cooperative in the classroom and take more responsibility for their

learning environment" (p. 5). Participants found just as high favorability rating with Figure 18

where participants Completely Agreed or Agreed at a 97.7% rate to the statement: *The AVID*

teacher makes me feel safe in their presence.

The Likert survey challenged the participants to rate their teachers' ability to be effective

with their social-emotional capacity to connect with them. Interestingly, two of the Likert

statements in this category reflected less than Completely Agree—Figures 21 Agreed at

(32.91%) and Figure 25 Agreed at (36.58%) respectively. Figure 21 posed the statement; *The*

AVID teachers sometimes use various cultural activities in the lessons, and had a 50.84% Agree

rate. The explanation is unclear as to why this statement posed such a high Agree rate when

compared to the Completely Agree rate of 32.91%. However, one can surmise that participants

may not have experienced many opportunities for various cultural experiences such as AVID

fieldtrips, culturally selective reading and writing opportunities throughout their AVID

experiences, or opportunities to inter-racially mix with peers since most AVID participants are

Hispanics. Also, lack of years as an AVID student may also have impacted this outcome. Figure

25, *The AVID teachers connect emotionally with me*, had an Agree rate of 43.55%, much higher

than the Completely Agree rate of 36.58%. There is no conclusive evidence as to why the Agree

rate is higher than the Completely Agree rate. However, emotions are ever evolving, changing,

and as is the case with anything emotionally related, feelings will be reflective most of time in

the moment of "now" as to how anyone feels emotionally. Participants may have also

considered all their AVID teachers in their academic career, thus when considering how to

answer they concluded that not all their AVID teachers may have emotionally connected with

them. And as in Figure 21, a lack of years as an AVID student may have impacted this outcome

as well.

Overall, the 10 Likert statements in this category revealed that 48.63% of participants

Completely Agree and 42.53% Agree to the social-emotional statements, for a combined 91.16%

agreement rate, thus 8.84% of participants who were in some form of disagreement. There is no

valid evidence that suggests why the participants who disagreed were dissatisfied with their

AVID teacher. In fact, thousands of students who function in everyday schools across America

have low rates of feeling connected emotionally with any adult in school. The percentages of

having a few students who populate these five examined high school AVID classes would most

certainly be likely. However, where the make-up and design of the typical AVID class is to

dispel emotional and social disconnectedness and instead create greater social and emotional

connectedness and capacity, has this researcher concerned and requires further investigation as to

why this phenomenon has occurred. Blum (2005) offers evidence as to why this phenomenon

may have revealed itself as previously noted when he related—Individuals create school connectedness by the time they are in high school, but as many as 40 to 60 percent of all students—urban, suburban and rural—are chronically disengaged from school.

Focus group discussions highlighted findings from social-emotional statements that continuously recognized participants' acknowledgements of their AVID teachers for their social and emotional support. Two statements were presented to the focus group participants, one: *The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.* The statements had previously been presented in the Likert survey (Figure 23) and had an 89.43% Agreement rate and focus group participants praised their AVID teachers with anecdotal tales such as:

My AVID teacher does support me emotionally, with appropriate advice, whether it's a relationship out of school or inside school. She always has the best advice to give. (P3520)

My AVID teacher supports me emotionally with advice such as not stressing out with work and school and dealing with time management because every day I work 35 hours a week at Goodwill ... 35 hours a week ... and come to school and pass all my courses. (P3084)

I haven't connected emotionally with my teacher, but I have with my last year AVID teacher. I feel if I ever needed to trust someone, I know I can always count on my AVID teacher. (P2859)

My AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice with always being honest in life and school or in general. Being honest could be helpful with situations. Another emotionally appropriate advice that she gives us is being, showing integrity. (P0908)

Another statement presented to the focus group participants also asked them to evaluate their connectedness emotionally with their AVID teacher. Likert survey (Figure 25) statement: *The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me,* had an overall Agreement rate of 80.13%, lowest amongst the 10 Likert survey statements within the social-emotional section. However, anecdotally focus group members were very generous in their willingness to speak candidly and honestly. For example:

My past middle school teacher and I were very close. I remember freshman year, I didn't know how to adjust to high school. It was very hard on me. So, one day, I found myself going to middle school and she was there and we just talked for over an hour just talking about the differences about middle school and high school, and she really helped me understand how to actually get through the problem. And it was very ... it really did help me adjust to high school and it gave me a bigger understanding of what my goals are. (P8997)

I'd say my AVID teacher does connect with me emotionally because she understands what I'm feeling, she gives me her support, and she makes me understand there's a solution to my problem or what I'm going through. That helps me as a student, and it motivates me, so I'm very thankful for that. (P2052)

My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me. I think that could be said for the whole class because she notices when somebody is having a bad day or she notices when something happens or when something is going on in somebody's life and they're not acting the same. She tries to ask them what's going on because she genuinely wants to know and she cares about the student, not just as a paycheck but she thinks of the student as a person and not just a teenager and she understands that it's not just a problem that

you go, that happens when you're a teenager that's just like that, but there's real things

that are going on that somebody might be scared of or somebody may not feel safe at

home or just different things that go on and she always understands that and she's always

willing to understand and listen and I really think she's there for everybody, not just me.

Not just her, but for everybody in the class. (P5162)

The focus group participants, with very few exceptions, openly expressed their great

appreciation for their AVID teachers. The findings within the focus group discussions strongly

suggests that participants were both supported emotionally with appropriate advice and

connected to emotionally by their AVID teachers. Participants continuously used descriptive

words such as: comfortable, succeeding, advice, feelings, personal, connections, choices, open-

up, helping, consideration, positive and overcome to describe their feelings towards their AVID

teacher's efforts in connecting with them both socially and emotionally.

Attendance Interpretations

AVID considers regular school attendance not only vital, but a critical aspect to

monitoring those students at-risk of failing or dropping out of school. Therefore, AVID teachers

maintain a heighten awareness of students' dependability to attend school regularly and as such

will monitor attendance patterns to ensure participants are not slipping through the crack as can

occasionally happen in large comprehensive schools.

As discussed in the Likert survey attendance findings, Figure 32 had a high agreement

rate among participants. Several reasons can apply as to why this agreement rate is so high,

including a sense of participants not wanting to disappoint their AVID teacher, or even more

likely, a thorough understanding from their AVID teacher's influence that missing even one day

of school can set any scholarly determined student back days, if not weeks academically. Other

considerations can include the participant's understanding that missing school means a temporary loss of socializing, or an inability to participate in an extracurricular activity. Pride can also play a role in the decision making to attend school daily because participants are regularly honored with attendance recognition awards from administrators and departments.

Conversely, disagreement in the Likert survey's attendance portion (Figures 30 and 31) may simply be that most AVID participants rarely miss school on a regular basis. The infrequency of participants missing school are few and far between as the data revealed in Figure 34. As a result, AVID teachers may not be so inclined to call home in the rare instances when participants are indeed absent, especially if a participant misses so few days all school year as the data previously revealed in Figure 34. Likewise, participants who miss school for any reason but are not an attendance risk in the first place may also opt not to let their AVID teachers know of a planned absence for numerous personal reasons or simply because it's not a practice they have embraced over their academic career. In both these instances, the teacher and participant may feel there was not an urgency or compelling reason to check on the absent participant or vise-versa, the participant inform the AVID teacher of the absence.

Focus Group Interpretations

Focus group members spoke candidly on five statements provided to them, two each from the academic and social-emotional components from the Likert survey and one statement from the Likert survey attendance portion. One of the resounding findings from the focus group discussions was the overwhelming positive sentiments participants continually expressed about their AVID teachers. Participants shared heart-felt appreciation for their AVID teachers' dedication, hard work, caring and nurturing styles and most critically, how their AVID teachers

chose to help cultivate the teacher-student relationship to levels that built trust, confidence and understanding.

These appreciative sentiments and attitudes easily explain why the Likert responses were so favorably high in Agreement for nearly all 25 statements. Participant after participant expressed honesty, and candidness in explaining how their AVID teacher-student relationship impacted their academics, emotional and social behaviors, and their daily attendance.

Interestingly however, Gehlbach et al. (2012) who looked at teacher-student relationships related that it remains unclear whether it is even plausible to think that teachers might cause improved student outcomes by enhancing their individual relationships with students (p. 692). Their study, however, examined a wide range of students and grade levels, and does not mention any support classes or programs such as AVID, which can often tip the scale for improved outcomes and improved relationships with adults.

Therefore, when the researcher compared his study to the Gehlbach et al. (2012) study and the value of the AVID teacher-student relationship from the perception of the participant, the data revealed quite a different result in terms of the participants' appreciation for their teacher-student relationships. For example, nearly all Focus Group Tables (1 - 30) revealed high levels of satisfaction and nearly unanimous positive levels of teacher appreciation and connectedness. Key examples include statements such as:

> Whenever I feel stressed out or sometimes I feel like I just wanna give up, he always encourages me to try my best no matter how much I do, no matter if it takes up to five in the morning just finishing that assignment, I get it done no matter ... because I wanna make him proud of me. (P8997)

My teacher supports me in my academic needs because she's there very early in the mornings so if I need tutoring, I can go to her class for tutoring and she tries to help all of us out with everything we need. She gives us time during class to do our homework when we need help, and as well as she does our recommendation letters, like this year, for all the seniors, she did a letter of recommendation which took a lot of time and were like 32 students and it was meaningful for us. (P0467)

My AVID teacher does support me emotionally, with appropriate advice, whether it's a relationship in the family that's broken, or something with a friend or a peer. The teacher helps me to keep those relationships and find better ways to manage them. (P8306)

Curiously, a couple of focus group participants were reluctant to respond to the emotional statement: *The AVID teacher supports me with emotional advice*. One participant replied: *I don't really open-up to my teacher, so I would have to disagree with that one (P2859).* Another participant responded: *I would have to pass on that question (2123).* The researcher did not draw a clear conclusion to these responses; however, the remaining participants did have positive remarks:

I would say that my AVID teacher has helped me individually, and she really has supported me emotionally, because there are times when I have opened-up to her and she has been there to hear me and give me the support that I need. (P7346)

This year my AVID teacher has supported me emotionally since there are times where I feel I have negative emotions. I have thoughts because of personal problems or academic problems but this year my teacher has supported me telling me to remove all the negativity and put in positivity because they see more than just the regular tough student. They see a bright student that has a future in this world that has a lot of negativity and she

wants me to push myself to become more positive than any other student in my class. (P6417)

When participants were prompted with a second statement regarding their emotional connection to their AVID teacher, all participants had responded and many of them overwhelmingly positive with praise for their AVID teachers in their replies. The statement: *The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me*, solicited responses such as:

My AVID teacher connects emotionally with me because when we're going through hard times, especially because we practically grew up with her because we started freshman to senior year with her, it makes us more like a family and she becomes like our second mom. She's there to support us with anything, school personally, this last year I have been getting really sick and I hadn't been coming to school often and she made my AVID classmates make cards for me and send them to me and I felt like she really cared a lot 'cause not a lot of teachers take time to do that and it meant a lot because she's always there, if you're not there in school to talk to her, she'll send you a text or something asking if you're fine and she's there like any other mother would be. So, I really appreciate my AVID teacher a lot. (P0467)

Because of my AVID class, I always ... I feel comfortable coming to school. I'm ahead of the game in my classes, just reviewing content in my AVID classes weekly and it really helps me gain an edge over the other students overall. It's a really big support system, and I love it. (P8997)

The final component of the focus group question had participants responding to the statement: *As a result of my AVID teacher's influence, I have come to understand the importance*

of attending school regularly. In general, all responses to this statement were in positive. Examples included:

> The teachers that I have had in AVID have influenced me in attending school regularly because they told me if you come to school you're going to do greater in school and I've noticed that because there's some days that I just don't come to school and my grades start to drop from one day. (P3080)
>
> For my AVID teacher's influence, yeah, I've understood the importance of attending school regularly as required by law. Yeah, it's true. Again, as a junior, if you miss one day, you miss a whole semester. It's really hard to come back from just missing an hour of class. It's super difficult. I know that when my AVID teacher says you've got to come to school, you've got to come to school. (P4593)

The interpretation of the focus group data highly suggests extreme satisfactions with their teacher-student relationships in context of the responded to statements of academics, emotional support and attendance. These responses do completely align with the data from the Likert survey and complete a triangulation of agreement. The hypothesis that the teacher-student relationship impacted the participants' perceptions in their academics were routinely found to be positively valid. Participants also showed a very high belief that their AVID teachers did influence their emotional wellbeing in a mixture of positive ways. And although there were a couple of outliers in one of the emotional statements, participants' participation in the statement still weighed positively in the overall findings. The participants also found favor in their likelihood to attend school regularly in their responses due to their AVID teacher-influences and or that relationship they have with their AVID teachers.

Context of Findings

The findings of this study and the research design support the working hypothesis that by having positive teacher-student relationships, students will excel in three theoretical constructs: academics, emotional and social growth, and being attuned to the importance of attending school daily. More specifically, this study procedurally evaluated the AVID teacher-AVID student relationship to determine whether the emphasis of that AVID teacher-student relationship impacted an AVID student's life in the three theoretical constructs studied, and if so, how did it compare to their non-AVID peers.

Numerous authors, scholarly journals and other publishing's within this study concur that by having positive teacher-student relationships, outcomes related to academics, social-emotional wellbeing, a sense of feeling secured and safe, and a healthy attitude towards attending school will thrive. Many of the authors in this study support the vast amount of influences that teachers have on students, including Corso et al. (2013); Doll et al. (2014); Fredericks et al. (2004); Gehlbach et al. (2012); Glasser (1992); Jacobson (2000); Morganett (1991); Phillippo & Stone (2013); Sabol & Pianta (2012); Spilt et al. (2011); Usla & Gizir (2016), and Vincent et al. (2013). These authors and others have routinely reported the significance of the teacher-student relationship, especially in areas of engagement, social and emotional wellbeing, sense of belonging, connectedness, motivation, academic growth by hosting and supporting an environment that is nurturing and caring.

The research found consistency with current finding in the field that teacher-student relationships do indeed support academics growth—Bernstein-Yamashiro (2004), Ellerbrock et al. (2015); Gehlbach et al. (2012); Goodenow & Grady (1993); Marzano (2011), Murray & Murray, (2004); Pianta (1999); and Pianta & Hamre (2009). Further evidence by the researcher

from academic GPA comparisons of AVID participants versus non-AVID peers conclusively showed a greater rate for higher academic GPA achievement over a five-semester look. Moreover, the combined data and research supports that having positive teacher-student relationships will improve the student overall social and emotional growth, thus resulting in greater outcomes overall for academics, social-emotional components and school attendance.

Authors Baroody et al. (2014), Connolly (1995); Ellerbrock et al. (2015); Jennings & Greenberg (2008); Marzano (2011); Pugh (2016); Spilt et al. (2011); Roffey (2012); and Vitto (2003) were consistent with the researcher's findings that when social-emotional support systems were in place via the AVID teacher's willingness to engage their participants, healthy relationships evolved, thus student social and emotional wellbeing improved.

The Likert survey revealed an agreement rate of over 91% for participants who felt their AVID teachers addressed the concerns of their emotional and social needs. Further, focus group comments by participants also revealed a high rate of favorability and appreciation of their AVID teachers. None of the 24 focus group participants mentioned any conflict, concern or negative sentiments towards their AVID teachers. The focus group findings do substantiate the researcher's theory that building capacity for positive teacher-student relationships evolves into a greater sense of connectedness and thus develop into a family-like condition for all involved.

The findings in the field also agreed with the researcher's hypothesis that by developing positive relationships, daily school attendance would improve. Author's, including Anderson et al. (2004); Balfanz et al. (2007); Blum (2005); Fine (1991); Gehlbach et al. (2012); Kearney (2008); Klem & Connell (2004); Lamdin (1996); Reeves (2008); Roby (2004) and Watkins (2008) wrote extensively on the critical need for teachers to form positive relations with students to improve daily attendance, connectedness, relatedness and decrease dropout rates. The data

provided by the researcher's school district did reveal that AVID participants achieved greater attendance rates overall compared to their non-AVID peers. Although these increases were modest gains in this study, AVID participants did indeed outpace their peers in all five-semesters surveyed.

The measurements of this study (Likert survey, focus groups, school district GPA and attendance data) were vital in designing the study. The mixed methods approach enabled the researcher to discover a variable that none of the authors within this study's research discussed—support mechanisms beyond the teacher, such as peer support, college-age tutors, AVID's unique curriculum design—all of which that not only supported curricular development, but also included structures to build capacity for social and emotional growth.

The finding of this study conclusively fit into the provided data in the specified theoretical constructs of academics, emotional and social capacity, and attendance. Participants by in large found high levels of agreement and favor with their AVID teacher-student relationships and in fact, the data suggests that in at least the academics and attendance, the AVID participants outperformed their non-AVID peers within the district.

However, within the research conducted, there was one group of researchers who could not substantiate whether the teacher-student relationship impacted the students' academics in a positive manner. Since the Gehlbach et al. (2012) study investigated relationships and how they change from the beginning of the school year to the end, including emergent themes such as changes in academics and motivation, the researcher drew an obvious conclusion that academics was a primary outcome they examined. When the researcher evaluated the social-emotional component of the Likert survey responses, again he found very high and favorable participant responses. Participants Completely Agreed or Agreed on the social-emotional component of the

Likert survey (see Figures 18 – 27) at a combined rate of 91.53%. Again, this measure does not draw a comparison to the Gehlbach et al. (2012) study, but it did validate the importance of this study and the teacher-student relationship in supporting among other things—social-emotional outcomes, an influence that Gehlbach et al. (2012) found lacking in their study where they wrote, "It remains unclear whether it is even plausible to think that teachers might cause improved student outcomes by enhancing their individual relationships with students" (p. 692).

The Likert rating scale, designed to measure people's attitudes, opinions, or perceptions, was easy to access and use by all 479 participants. The Likert survey was both received and submitted electronically through a third-party on-line survey design company. The identities of the survey participants were never sought, except for participants being asked to voluntarily list the last four-digits of their home or cell phone numbers as a form of proving a unique identification to support triangulation. In the rare instance where participants did not have either a home or cell phone, participants were asked to list four unique numbers of their choosing.

All participants, especially focus group participants, understood their identities were anonymous, which afforded the focus groups participants to be candid and genuine with their responses. Participants responded with a tone of certainty in their replies, thus creating a high level of confidence for the researcher to consider in his evaluation of the transcripts.

The internal five-semester data the researcher received from the school district validated the hypothetical findings that AVID participants outperformed their peers academically with a consistently higher GPA, and in attending school more frequently with a lower absentee rate. The data from the five high schools, which was compiled by the school district's research and development department, included data for the five semesters (2015 – 2018) being studied and calculated the overall GPAs and attendance strands for *all* 11th and 12th grade students from the

five high schools, including the participants of this study. The research and development department also segregated the AVID students from the non-AVID students, thus making the data more comparable to read.

The data has a few dependent variables specifically relying on how effective the teacher-student relationship worked between the two parties. As a dependent variable, participants almost unanimously agree that their AVID teacher's influence impacted their academic growth and social and emotional outcomes in a positive manner.

Implications of Findings

As widely researched the field of teacher-student relationships are, validating the importance of the relationship for students at-risk or in the middle, such as AVID students, has profoundly underscored the researcher's hypothesis for the phenomenon. Nearly all the 479 participants reported improved academics, greater social-emotional capacity, and high rates of daily attendance. Likert surveys to all 479 students consistently had a combined agreement rate average of over 92% for the three parts. Participants expressed both anecdotally and directly the importance of their teacher-student relationship during focus group discussions, especially with favorable emphasis on academic support and social-emotional wellbeing.

The findings within this study would virtually be useful to any teacher, school, school district, or any academic program wishing to build greater capacity for academics, social-emotional issues and attendance. Further, administrators, and or lead district operators and alike (consultants) could and should place more emphasis in annual trainings and discussions on the importance of teacher-student relationships. Teacher and student surveys can assist in the design and development of such endeavor. Why this phenomenon is critical is for one, academics will improve across the school leading to higher graduation rates, improved morale and less

disciplinary issues. Two, social and emotional issues will decrease, thus lightening the burden

on an already over-worked, understaffed counseling department, and increase the social

awareness and emotional issues that pervade all campuses in today's societies. Three, Average

Daily Attendance (ADA) will increase, thus increased revenues per student means more funding

to acquire more badly needed academic support tools, or fund a new teacher hire, and address

social-emotional needs in the form of additional trainings, additional staffing, and or additional

support tools for students to embrace. But more notably, improved attendance will increase all

measures across any campus including participation rates in extracurriculars, school pride and

image, school spirit, school connectedness and belonging, and decreased dropout rates, improved

graduation rates, and decreased community crime rates including truancy.

Discussion on Limitations of Study

As discussions on the limitations in Chapter 1 explained that the data from this study is

from only one public school district in the state of California. The sampling pool of students

(479) represent an extremely small percentage of the total 11th and 12th grade AVID students in

the state and in fact, the nation. This small sampling is also specific to students who have been

labeled as potentially at-risk, residing in potentially lower-socioeconomic living areas of a highly

populated Hispanic urban community. Since a significant number of participants, 450 (see

Figure 4), who participated in this study were Hispanic, an unproportionate number of the

remaining ethnicities, 29, make-up the remaining participants within this study. However, all

non-Hispanic participants found favorable agreement in their Likert survey responses. Also, four

of these 29 participants who partook in focus group discussions were all appreciative and in

complete agreement that their AVID teachers positively impacted their academics, positively

influenced their social-emotional growth, and had positive influence in their daily attendance.

The second limitation that was discussed in Chapter 1 predicted that not all participants of the study would indeed partake. However, contrary to that prediction, all 479 AVID participants did indeed partake in the Likert survey. The survey design included seven demographic questions and 25 statements. However, not all participants answered *all* Likert survey questions and statements. There was a total of 12 unanswered survey questions and four unanswered statements. Of the potentially 32 replied to questions/statements by all 479 participants, 15,312 of the 15,328 questions/statements were responded to by participants. The big picture here is that all 479 AVID participants took part in the survey because of not being absent on the day of the survey, which is not surprising since these participants have a high dependability rate to attend school daily. No participants declined to participate, again another example of the AVID teacher influence of their students' behaviors, norms and expectations, and the students' exemplifying resilience to perform a battery of surveys late in the school year as other tests, exams and stressors are prevalent in the junior and senior classes.

The last limitation discussed was how properly the Likert survey would be administered by the participants' AVID teachers, including directions for student to be honest and unbiased. It was also unknown if proctoring directions were administered properly prior to the survey. Based on the results of the extremely high completion rate of the Likert survey, the researcher concluded that directions were administered properly, including expectations to complete the survey with fidelity, to remain unbiased, and when replying to the statements, only consider the AVID teachers in their academic career in mind. Since the average time of the Likert survey's completion was under five-minutes, it can be argued that participants had little time to consider biased opinions from fellow participants. Furthermore, there was no evidence of any Likert survey participant who answered exclusively the same multiple-choice response for all 25

statements, such as Completely Agree, Agree, Disagree and Completely Disagree. Thus, the researcher feels confident the participants performed the Likert survey with a high rate of fidelity and honesty.

Discussion of Future Directions of Research/Field

AVID has promoted many capacities that seemingly all teachers should have and apply in their daily teaching experiences. For example, promoting positive teacher-student relationships through cognitive activities that AVID has historically utilized, including tutorials, Socratic seminars, philosophical chairs, focused note taking, and development of soft skills such as networking, and creating more opportunities for constructive, thoughtful oral dialogue all lend themselves to developing and solidifying the teacher-student relationship. When students feel connected, connections will occur. School districts and lead administrators should consider exploring pathways or opportunities for staff to seek AVID trainings through either district or county led AVID PATH trainings (Attend Professional Learning / Path to Schoolwide, n.d.), or AVID Summer Institutes that are annually held throughout the nation.

Just as important as training and staff development is the awareness for positive teacher-student relationships. Teacher education and or induction programs need to conduct new courses on the importance of the teacher-student relationship. Currently, the topic of teacher-student relationship is cursorily covered in the programs across the nation. Awareness of the importance of the teacher-student relationship is vital for improved student outcomes and student healthy school experiences.

Another consideration that should be explore is the concept of looping—that is keeping the same AVID teachers with their cohort of students from grades nine through twelve. By allowing this opportunity to build relationships via an elective class such as AVID, students may

benefit at a greater rate with their academics, and social-emotional constructs than if they were to have AVID yearly with different teachers. Also, by allowing AVID teachers to loop with their cohort of students for their duration of their high school experience, the teacher-student bond is strengthened in a number of areas, including: trust of one another—students become acutely aware of their responsibility to their cohort of peers and other academic and social matters; a greater teacher accountability for AVID students that ensures students are pursuing academic excellence, taking rigorous course work, career and college pursuit goals are being attained, and graduation requirements are being met on a regular basis. In a way, the AVID teacher becomes a personal counselor for their individual students in their AVID cohort.

Participants in this study gave their opinions to the concept of looping. At the end of the focus group sessions, the researcher asked participants a question to gage their thoughts and opinions related to the importance of the AVID teacher-student relationship. (The question was not part of the Likert survey). The researcher explained that he may conduct future research on the following: *Do you feel there is more value in having one AVID teacher for your entire four-years of high school, or conversely, more value in having multiple AVID teachers during your high school experience*. With only one exception, 23 of 24 participants from the focus groups saw greater value in remaining with the same AVID teacher for four-years in high school. Their reasons for this included, greater connectedness, consistent accountability and expectations from same teacher, teacher having historical context of student's life, a bond of trust, and a mother/father-like or family sense of belonging.

The one participant who saw greater value in having multiple AVID teachers stated it wasn't a real scenario in preparation for college. The participant argued that in college there would rarely if ever be an experience with the same professor more than once. The participant

did state; however, "I understand the idea of one AVID teacher for all four-years," and compared it to, ". . . having that 'go-to' person when in an academic or social-emotional struggle—almost like having a peer mentor" (P8616). This participant did state; however, "If required to have the same AVID-teacher for all four years, I wouldn't object or be disappointed" (P8616).

The researcher has had numerous AVID classes the past two decades, including those with different students/grade levels from year-to-year. He has also looped with his students for four-consecutive years—twice the last two decades. The researcher has found probative value in the looping of students. Looping allowed the researcher to form greater bonds, develop a greater capacity for understanding the students' challenges, and most importantly, maintain a consistency with the students where he saw them through the process of every aspect towards meeting graduation requirements and his students' pursuit of college/career endeavors.

Curiously, this researcher has often wondered why there was always a higher ratio of girls to boys in his AVID classrooms and in the school's AVID program. This phenomenon occurred year after year. At times, AVID girls accounted for as much as 70 percent of the students in the AVID program versus that of boys. In this current study, the previously identified gender breakdown of the participants revealed that 160 (33.83%) males, and 313 (66.17%) females (see Figure 2) took part in this study. Uslu and Gizir (2016) may have an explanation to this quandary. Uslu and Gizir (2016) found in their study that girls have a greater sense of belonging than boys, and that the relationship expectancies for success and sense of belonging are stronger for girls than they are for boys. It could be reasoned that AVID, by its ever-evolving work and emphasis on building relationships, lends itself to this phenomenon and thus, explains why the researcher's classes over the past two decades always had a much higher percentage of girls to boys. AVID site administrators and coordinators need to design recruitment programs

that bring more boys into the AVID elective class. Resources to perform this task in not cost prohibitive and merely requires a greater focus on structuring recruitment plans that gives students and parents more access to what, why and how AVID helps students achieve overall in their high school experiences.

The findings of this study are relevant for both AVID and school district implications, primarily in the validation that by having positive teacher-student relations with appropriate support mechanisms in place, such as for example, district support to implement AVID schoolwide/districtwide. School districts will also need to budget for training staff in AVID methodologies and philosophies, the hiring of AVID trained tutors and most importantly, develop district in-service and or trainings on not only the importance of the teacher-student relationship and how that impacts the relationship with students, but also how teachers can build and develop those relationships in a healthy and nurturing manner for all students they teach.

Conclusions

The data from the Likert survey overwhelmingly concluded that when teachers have positive relationships with students, overall academic growth flourishes, greater social-emotional capacities are achieved, and students uniformly increase their daily attendance rates.

Testimonials from the participant's focus group discussions validate a high rate of appreciations for participant's AVID teachers, especially the recognition that the AVID teachers made positive impactful differences in the participant's lives with regards to academics, social-emotional outcomes and a willingness to attend school regularly.

School district data distinctively provided a backdrop of clear and convincing evidence that AVID 11th and 12th grade students at the five high schools examined outpaced their peers in all data slots, including overall GPAs, and annual semester attendance rates.

It is with great certainty that when positive teacher-student relationships evolve, so too does academics, social and emotional growth, and improved school attendance. Teachers must be the catalyst for this imperative shift in their own pedagogy and should not rely on site or district training to make this change happen. Moreover, over 95% of the participants in this study reported a great deal of agreement in their positive relationships with their AVID teachers. This high percentage can and should be in all classrooms across America. What AVID teachers do daily are not exclusively learned methodologies to AVID teachers only. All teachers should aspire to develop positive relationships with their students if for nothing else, but to have a harmonious classroom in terms of family-like conditions, reduced negative behavioral incidents, improved academics and attendance, and a classroom full of trust, integrity and pride.

Summary

Robinson and Aronica, (2016) explained that the fundamental purpose of education is to help students learn. Learning is the primary objective of all educational institutions. As such, Robinson and Aronica, (2016) continue to state:

> But modern education systems are cluttered with every sort of distraction. There are political agendas, national priorities, union bargaining positions, building codes, job descriptions, parental ambitions, peer pressures. The list goes on. But the heart of education is the relationship between the student and the teacher. Everything else depends on how productive and successful that relationship is. If that is not working, then the system in not working. If students are not learning, education is not happening. Something else may be going on, but it's not education. (pp. 171-172)

Understanding and recognizing the distractors mentioned by Robinson and Aronica (2016), AVID teachers; therefore, take on the challenge of being that one person the AVID

students can count on; and an additional sense of responsibility is deepened within the AVID teacher's heart and begins the nexus for the teacher-student relationship. Sinha and Thornburg (2012) explained teachers often struggle with competing imperatives: the need to be responsive to their students' real needs and vulnerabilities while fulfilling the requirements of their institutional, professional and cultural codes. However, with this delicate balance in tow, AVID teachers manage to keep their focus on the needs of the student at a keen level. While AVID teachers' roles and responsibilities are numerous, perhaps their primary concerns are to ensure all their students are preparing themselves academically, social, emotionally and personal responsibility-wise in preparation for higher education or vocational pathways. After all, AVID is about those "students in-the-middle" and their "individual determination to succeed" and pursue a college and or career pathway.

The 25 Likert survey statements measured participants' perceptions of their AVID teacher(s), and how that relationship influenced participants' academics, social-emotional wellbeing, and a greater willingness to attend school. The Likert findings also addressed the three research questions, including question one, and those results supported the researcher's theory that by having a positive teacher-student relationship, participants will improve their overall outcomes in academics, social-emotional wellbeing and daily attendance. Research question two asked if the participants' AVID teachers did indeed support them in their social and emotional behaviors, and data soundly validated that belief, including the participants sense of safety while in their AVID teacher's presence and social mobility (networking). Research question three had a mix of agreements, both positive and negative; however, most participants did agree that their AVID teacher(s) did positively influence them to attend school at a greater

rate. Further, district wide data consistently revealed that AVID participants in both grade levels had a higher dependability rate to attend school more frequently than their non-AVID peers.

Focus group discussions supported the researcher's theory that participants improved at a greater rate in their academics. Examination of the five-semesters validated AVID participants to achieve higher overall GPAs than their peers in both grade levels. Focus group discussions supported the researcher's theory that participants had improved social-emotional support from their AVID teachers. The participants revealed a nurturing, caring environment provided by their AVID teacher(s). Participants felt their AVID teachers were one of the most influential people in their lives. Focus group discussions finally supported the researcher's theory that participants improved and a willingness to attend school daily due in part to their AVID teachers' influence. Examination of the five-semesters validated AVID participants to achieve higher overall attendance rates than their peers in both grade levels.

The data and testimonials compiled in this study have soundly validated the importance of the teacher-student relationship, which examined the myopic perspective of the participants' overall academics, social and emotional wellbeing, and a greater willingness to attend school. The participants conclusively outpaced their peers within this school system in all measured data—academic GPA, social-emotional wellbeing, and dependability to attend school daily. The evidence that supports the conclusions do include the acknowledgement that AVID teachers, with appropriate support mechanisms in place, such as tutors and effective training from AVID staff developments/developers and or district AVID personnel, will greatly impact student outcomes in the measured areas. However, the most significant impact for greater outcomes is made directly from the time put into nurturing the positive teacher-student relationship.

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Appendix A

Likert Scale Survey

Parameters **Academics**	Strongly Agree 1	Somewhat Agree 2	Somewhat Disagree 3	Strongly Disagree 4
1. The AVID teachers provide academic support for me.				
2. The AVID teachers offer alternative opportunities to learn various and new subject matter.				
3. The AVID teachers present academic information in a way that is understanding and related to meaningful learning.				
4. The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in my classes.				
5. The AVID teachers provide constructive feedback on assignments.				
6. The AVID teacher provided clear expectations for my academic performance.				
7. The AVID teachers consistently engage me in real-world learning and experiences				
8. When asking AVID teachers for assistance, I can do it without dear of embarrassment.				
9. The AVID teachers call me out if I am being lazy with assignments.				
10. The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs.				
Parameters **Social-Emotional**	Strongly Agree 1	Somewhat Agree 2	Somewhat Disagree 3	Strongly Disagree 4
1. The AVID teacher makes me feel safe in their presence.				
2. The AVID teacher provides a welcoming social environment.				
3. The AVID teacher addresses the importance of networking while in school.				
4. The AVID teacher sometimes uses various cultural activities in the lessons.				

	Strongly Agree 1	Somewhat Agree 2	Somewhat Disagree 3	Strongly Disagree 4
5. The AVID teacher explains why being social can support opportunities for networking with new classmates.				
6. The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.				
7. The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with positive recognition.				
8. The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me.				
9. I feel emotionally safe in my AVID teacher's class.				
10. I am emotionally positive on a regular basis when I come to the AVID class.				
Parameters **Daily School Attendance**	**Strongly Agree 1**	**Somewhat Agree 2**	**Somewhat Disagree 3**	**Strongly Disagree 4**
1. The AVID teacher motivates me to come to school daily.				
2. The AVID teacher explains the overall importance of attending school daily.				
3. The AVID teacher will call home when I'm not in school for an extended length of time.				
4. When compared to other teachers, I will always let my AVID teacher know when I have a planned absence.				
5. As a result of my AVID teachers' influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly.				

Appendix B

Focus Group Statements

FOCUS GROUP STATEMENTS
1. The AVID teachers motivate me to give my best effort in my classes.
2. The AVID teacher supports me in my academic needs.
3. The AVID teacher supports me emotionally with appropriate advice.
4. The AVID teacher connects emotionally with me.
5. As a result of my AVID teachers' influence, I have come to understand the importance of attending school regularly.
6. Please explain your overall AVID experience as it relates towards the teacher-student relationship.

Appendix C

Student Assent Form

Hello,

My name is Michael Collins. I am a third-year doctoral student at Concordia University Irvine. I am researching the impact on *teacher-student relationships* in the AVID program in grades 11 and 12. The research will rate the AVID teacher's ability to positively influence the AVID students' academics, social-emotional wellbeing and the willingness to attend school daily. Furthermore, the investigation intends to validate that having positive teacher-student relationships in the AVID elective classroom, students overall school experience will be constructively impacted. The below demographic and Likert scale surveys hope to bring additional data to the phenomena.

Student Assent:

STUDENT ASSENT FORM

If you agree to be in this study, we are going to ask you some questions about how you think of your AVID teacher(s). We want to know if you think they positively influence you in academics, in social and emotional growth, and in your willingness to attend school more regularly.

For example, we will ask you if your AVID teacher sets expectations for you to do homework regularly in *all* classes?

You can ask questions about this study at any time. If you decide at any time you do not want to finish, you can ask us to stop, and it will be granted.

The questions we will ask are only about what you think. There are no right or wrong answers because this is not a test.

If you "click" on the "YES" of this electronic form, it means that you have read this and that you want to be in the study. If you don't want to be in the study, simply "click" on the "NO" button. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you choose not to participate in this study or if you change your mind later.

- o YES
- o NO

DEMOGRAPHICS:
1. Your gender?
   - o Male
   - o Female
2. Your age?
   - o 20+
   - o 18-19
   - o 16-17
   - o 14-15

3. Your current grade level?
    o 12
    o 11
4. Your years in AVID?
    o 6+
    o 5+
    o 4+
    o 3+
    o 2+
    o 1+
    o Less than 1 year
5. Whom you live with?
    o My parent(s)
    o Family relative
    o Adopted parent(s)
    o Other
    o Prefer not to state
6. School currently attending?
    o HS1 *Redacted*
    o HS2 *Redacted*
    o HS3 *Redacted*
    o HS4 *Redacted*
    o HS5 *Redacted*
7. Rate your overall experience as an AVID student
    o Unsatisfactory
    o Needs improvement
    o Satisfactory
    o Met expectations
    o Exceeds expectations

Appendix D

Parent Informed Consent (English)

<div align="right">**PARENT INFORMED CONSENT**</div>

February 2018

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

I will be conducting a study at your child's school to determine the impact your child's AVID teacher(s) have had on their academics, social and emotional wellbeing, and willingness to attend school regularly. The study will conclude in August of 2018, but your child's participation in the study will conclude by the end of March 2018. This study is a part of my Doctorate degree at Concordia University Irvine, CA.

I am writing to ask permission to use the data I collect from your child during this process. Participation in this study involves taking an electronic survey of questions, one-on-one interviews and focus group interviews—all related to the impact their AVID teacher had on school career. Not all students who partake in this study will have an opportunity to partake in the one-on-one interviews or participate in the focus group sessions.

Your school's principal, _____, has approved this study for implementation at _____ high school.

The significance of the study is to determine the effectiveness of the teacher-student relationship in the AVID program and whether your student benefitted from a nurturing and caring teacher, thus improving their academics, social-emotional wellbeing and school attendance rate. The benefits to your child for participating in this study include greater understanding of the importance of the teacher-student relationship, thus making more impact for them once they go to college.

Only Dr. Karge, —my University Supervisor— and I will have access to your child's identity and to information that can be associated to your child's identity. The data and documentation will be destroyed by December 31, 2023 as required by law.

Use of data from your child is voluntary. You may contact me at any time regarding your child's participation. My phone number is ▆▆▆▆▆▆ and my e-mail is ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Collins

Please check the appropriate box below and sign the form:

☐ I give permission for my child's data to be used in this study. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. I have read this form and understand it.

☐ I do not give permission for my child's data to be included in this project.

Student's Name: _____ Date _____

Signature of Parents/Guardian: _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Parents/Guardian Date _____

Appendix E

Parent Informed Consent (Spanish)

PERMISO DE LOS PADRES

el marzo del año 2018

Estimados padres/tutores legales,

Realizaré un estudio en la escuela de su hijo(a) para determinar el impacto que los maestros AVID de su hijo(a) tuvieron en sus estudios académicos, su bienestar social y emocional y su disposición a asistir a la escuela con regularidad. El estudio concluirá en agosto de 2018, pero la participación de su hijo(a) en el estudio concluirá a fines de marzo de 2018. Este estudio forma parte de mí doctorado en la Universidad Concordia de Irvine, California.

Le escribo para pedirle permiso para usar los datos que recopile de su hijo(a) durante este proceso. La participación en este estudio incluye una encuesta electrónica de preguntas, entrevistas, individuales y entrevistas a grupos focales, todo relacionado con el impacto que su maestro(a) AVID tuvo en la carrera escolar. No todos los estudiantes que participen en este estudio tendrán la oportunidad de participar en las entrevistas individuales o participar en las sesiones grupales.

El/La director(a) de su escuela, _____ha aprobado este estudio para su implementación en la escuela secundaria_____.

La importancia del estudio es determinar le efectividad de la relación maestro-alumno en el programa AVID y si su estudiante se benefició de un(a) maestro(a) dedicado(a) y afectivo(a), mejorando así sus estudios académicos, el bienestar socioemocional y la tasa de asistencia escolar. Los beneficios para su hijo(a) por participar en este estudio incluyeron una mayor comprensión de la importancia de la relación maestro(a)-estudiante y así tener más impacto para ellos una vez que ingresan a la universidad.

Solo el Dr. Karge, mi supervisor de la universidad, y yo tendremos acceso a la identidad de su hijo(a) y a la información que puede estar asociada a la identidad de su hijo(a). Los datos y la documentación se destruirán antes del 31 de diciembre de 2023, tal como exige la ley.

El uso de los datos de su hijo(a) es voluntario. Puede comunicar conmigo en cualquier momento con respecto a la participación de su hijo(a). Mi número de teléfono es ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ y mi correo electrónico es ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Sinceramente,

Michael P. Collins

Marque la casilla correspondiente a continuación y firme el formulario:

□Doy el permiso para que los datos de mi hijo(a) se usen en este estudio. Entiendo que yo recibirá una copia firmada de este formulario de consentimiento. He leído y entiendo el formulario.

□No doy permiso para que se incluyan los datos de mi hijo(a) en este proyecto.

El nombre del/ de la estudiante:_____ La fecha _____
Firma de los padres/tutores legales: _____ La fecha _____
Nombre impreso de los padres/tutores legales: _____ La fecha _____

Appendix F

National Institute of Health Certificate

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of
Extramural Research certifies that **Michael Collins**
successfully completed the NIH Web-based training
course "Protecting Human Research Participants."

Date of Completion: 04/13/2018

Certification Number: 2795556

NIH National Institutes of Health
Office of Extramural Research